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THE

SUPREME IMPORTANCE

OF A

RIGHT MORAL TO A RIGHT ECONOMICAL

STATE OF THE COMMUNITY:

WITH

OBSERVATIONS ON A RECENT CRITICISM

IN THE

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EDINBURGH REVIEW.

BY

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PREFACE.

We are now aware of at least ten different reviews on a work entitled, "Political Economy in connection with the Moral State and Moral Prospects of Society," and of these the majority are hostile to the principles of the Volume.*

Yet, in the following Pamphlet, we have singled out the article in the Edinburgh Review, as the only subject of our reply.

Our main reason for this is, that the Journal now mentioned still adheres to the Malthusian doctrine of Population; so that its opposition is more confined to such tenets as are peculiar to ourselves: whereas the other adverse criticisms of any weight, from the standing and authority of the periodicals in which they appear, all proceed on the assumption of that doctrine being erroneous; and hence, are rather directed against the views of Mr. Malthus, than against those which are properly our own.

That the rate at which Population would increase, if the adequate means of subsistence were at all times within reach, greatly exceeds the rate at which the means of subsistence can increase, with all the aids and practicable openings, which either the mechanical arts, or the sound and liberal policy of

* We have since seen the 'British Critic,' which concurs with us in the main lessons of our work.

governments could afford to human labour—we have long regarded as a position, founded both on the widest possible experience, and the clearest possible demonstration. This is the one doctrine, which—whether in respect of evidence by observation, or of deduction by reasoning—is more like a truth in mixed mathematics, than any other doctrine in the philosophy of human affairs.

Such being our strong convictions on the side of Mr. Malthus, we could not but lay our account with the strenuous opposition of all who differ from him. And this opposition, come when it may, was sure to be an impassioned one. The controversy in fact has long, in regard to all essential principle, been exhausted; and has now become a contest of feeling, rather than a contest of argument. Were it but a hostile conviction that stood in the way of the Malthusian doctrine, one might hope for the removal of it. But the case is different, when, instead of this, it is the revolt of pained and irritated sentiment, which, so far from being allayed, is exasperated the more, in very proportion as the lights of arithmetic and experience are made to shine upon the question. One might know how to manage a mere resistance of the understanding. But when it is resistance in the shape of a sensitive antipathy, it becomes more difficult to deal with. We might regret it. But we do not well see how we can redargue it.

The likest thing to it which we recollect, in the history of human controversies, is the state of parties, on that celebrated question in moral science—'the Liberty of the Will.' There is such a semblance, at least, of irrefragable reasoning, on the side of those who affirm the progressions of the mental, to be as certain and necessary as those of the material world—as, if not to have persuaded, at least very much to have provoked their antagonists. There is, we believe, in many instances, an honest apprehension for the interests of virtue; and hence, a moral indignation against the doctrine of necessity—all the more vivid, in proportion to the strength of that argument by which it is supported. And it is even so with

the recent, and not yet generally received doctrine of population, which, whenever it is proposed, comes into conflict with an amiable, though we think mistaken solicitude, for the interests of humanity—an instant repugnance of the heart against what is resented and recoiled from as a cold-blooded speculation. We are not sure if this will adequately explain the miserable distortions of 'the Quarterly'—though it may, perhaps, the outcries of 'the Eclectic;' and more especially, the aggrieved sensibilities of the old Gentleman, who writes in 'Frazer's Magazine,' and who tells us, that, for the offence of being a Malthusian, we have incurred his "perfect disgust and unqualified condemnation."

But there is another species of resentment, less pure and generous in its origin, under which it is possible that a reviewer may be tempted to commit an act of injustice. It not unfrequently happens, and more especially in an age when the Politics and the Political Economy have such a reciprocal influence in moulding and modifying each other; insomuch, that a doctrine in the science is often made the Shibboleth, or the watchword, of a party in the State,—that a leading Journal, at once the organ and the representative of all its adherents, signalizes itself by some favourite principle, of which it undertakes the championship; or by some specific of healing virtue for the distempers of the nation, of which it becomes the ostensible and the declared patron. It is thus that no science, perhaps, is placed in circumstances more unfavourable for the calm and dispassionate investigation of its doctrines, than Political Economy; nor can we imagine an influence more darkening and disturbing, or one more unfriendly to the progress of sound opinions—than when, amid the heats, whether of commercial or civil partizanship, each important question is made the signal for lighting up a fierce and interested warfare. The mischief is greatly exasperated, when a journal of high authority has embarked its credit on some noted project or panacea for the evils of our social condition; and whether it be Home-colonization, or a scheme of modified Pauperism, or an organized system of Emigration to distant lands, which its conductors have set

their hearts upon—they will not submit, without a struggle, to be told of the futility of all these expedients; and even truth itself will have the aspect of a Gorgon in their eyes, if, under its withering glare, their fond visions of philanthropy, and the devices of their profoundest wisdom, are laid prostrate in the dust.

But what the precise cause may be of the misrepresentations which we have suffered from the hands of certain journalists, it is needless to inquire. It is enough for our immediate purpose, that we state, in one or two sentences, what a few of these misrepresentations are.

The first is, that, under the exclusive power of one dominant and monopolizing conception, we have overlooked those great and prosperous enlargements, which may take place in the economic state of a country, apart from that moral influence of education, which they would have us represent, as being, not only of paramount, but of sole efficacy, in determining the condition of a people. Now, not only do we admit the successive and continuous additions, which are being made every year, to the riches and resources of our nation, but we rejoice in contemplating, how much, in this way, is still in reserve for us; and, more especially, do we venture to recommend certain practicable steps, as the commutation of Tithes and Taxes, the gradual abolition of the Corn Laws, and even, with certain modifications, a plan of national and organized Emigration; whereby to obtain a further postponement, or breathing time, from that extreme pressure, which we fear to be the ultimate destination of every people, abandoned to the recklessness of their own habits, and unprovided with a good and adequate educational system, for pervading the whole mass of the community, both with the culture of knowledge and the culture of principle.

The second misconception under which our interpreters seem to have laboured is, that all our reasonings proceed on the assumption of this ultimate pressure being now at hand, in the shape of a felt and palpable evil. Whereas, they

would regard it, for the present at least, as but a shadowy bugbear; which, if ever to be realized, stands from us at the distance of many centuries; to which remote futurity we may safely adjourn all our anxieties, for a right adjustment between the population and the food of the world. But here they have forgotten what we certainly have been at pains, however unsuccessfully, to inculcate upon our readers, that, for the effect of general and severe pressure, it is not necessary to wait till the food of the world shall have reached its extreme limit, and till its still advancing population shall be continuing to urge itself onward against a then stationary barrier. That there may be a felt straitening throughout the families of a land, it is enough, if the rate of increase in the population shall exceed the rate of increase in the means of their subsistence; so as to effect a pressure against a barrier, that is receding too slowly for the purposes of a free movement. It is thus that the philosophy of Malthus might find an exemplification, not in the last stages of the world's history alone, but throughout all its stages; and, most certainly, it is thus that, at every period, whether late or early, in the annals of our species, the people, if better morally, would have been better economically. There is no country on the face of the earth, that, even in its brightest season of rapid prosperity and progress, would not have enjoyed a larger sufficiency and comfort at the time, as well as a more permanent continuance of these to more distant ages, had the chief care of its government been the establishment of such an education, as might have secured for the land, that richest of all blessings, the formation of a humanized and well-taught peasantry.

But, thirdly, the most subtle, and perhaps, therefore, the most inveterate of all the delusions, on the part both of our readers and expounders, is—that, to school the people for that specific Malthusian result, which we hold to be so desirable, they would need to be specifically instructed in the Malthusian lesson, on the subject of population. We know not whether it be for the purpose of ridicule, or from sheer misconception, that this unintelligent view has sometimes been

given of our argument. The design of education is to elevate man, intellectually, and morally, and religiously, to a higher state than before; and, for the accomplishment of this general object, it is not necessary to go beyond the ordinary topics, whether of common or Christian scholarship. It is not at the bidding of the economists, that the people will be led to abstain from improvident marriages; or, indeed, to make any change whatever on their practical habits. But, what the people will not do at the bidding of the economists, they will, if once raised and transformed by the power of education, do, in obedience to their own higher tastes, and in conformity to the wider range which they can now take of their interests, whether in the present, or in the future world. A general and wished for result, may be the fruit of a general concurrence on the part of men, not one of whom shall have made that result the object of his distinct aim, or even of his distinct contemplation. It is enough, that each shall act wisely and virtuously for himself. The aggregate effect of a population, somewhat lightened in their numbers, and greatly raised in their economical condition, would be the sure result of an efficient system of education; although neither teachers nor taught ever looked to aggregates, and both were alike unconscious and innocent of Political Economy.

For the settlement of all other misunderstandings, between us and our critics, we must refer to the Pamphlet at large; in which, we have attempted a close examination of the strictures that have appeared against us in the 'Edinburgh Review'—the journal which, of all the others, we find, in the present instance, the easiest to deal with—and precisely because itself deals in the best and strongest arguments. We do not feel disposed to make any return, and, least of all, a return in kind, for the contemptuous, or the wrathful, effusions, of the London Periodicals; whereas, the definite statements and reasonings of our compatriot, can be met by counter-statements and counter-reasonings of our own.

Yet, we are not without hope, that our Anti-Malthusian castigators will be somewhat pacified, should they take the

trouble of attending to our subsequent representations. We do not even despair of altogether propitiating one of the most zealous of our adversaries—we mean the old Gentleman, who writes in 'Frazer's Magazine.' There are many who can bear with the truth, as exemplified in special instances,—in the state of one district, or the history of one household; yet, whom the very same truth would put into a state of nervous discomfort, if generalized into a summary expression, or enunciated in the terms of an obnoxious theory. Our aged, and, though we have not the pleasure of his acquaintance, we believe, our excellent friend, will, notwithstanding all the fierceness of his hostility to Mr. Malthus, perfectly go along with ourselves, when we point out the moral degeneracy of our towns and families, and plead for the adoption of instant and vigorous counteractives to the crying evil. He will clearly enough perceive the connection between respectable character and respectable economic comfort, in all individual cases. In other words, we shall agree in particulars—however much we may differ when we come to universals. Could we only abstain from at all meddling with the question in the gross, we should fully sympathize, and be perfectly satisfied with each other, in all matters of detail. Whether we treat of the recklessness of parents, or the consequent destitution and profligacy of their children, we have the confident expectation, from a certain breath of goodness about the man, and which animates even the most indignant of his periods, that he will mitigate somewhat the verdict which he has pronounced against us, of perfect disgust, and unqualified condemnation.

We had hoped, at the commencement of our present effort, to have comprised within the pages of a moderate pamphlet, a full answer to the article in the Edinburgh Review. But we have felt it necessary to confine ourselves to the discussion of such questions as are more of a practical character; and have reserved, for a brief postscript, the succinct treatment of certain matters, which more properly belong to Political Economy, considered as a science.

In the Preface to our work, we stated, that we were not sanguine either of a general, or of an instant reception for its doctrines, and laid our account with its novelties being long disregarded or derided as paradoxes. The vigour and vehemence of the opposition that we have raised, does not therefore surprise us; while there is nothing, at the same time, in the character of that opposition to make us despair. Had we been discouraged by the incredulity of others, we should long ere now have given up our peculiar views on the question of Pauperism. But neither their resistance, nor their ridicule, could prevail against our own experimental verification of them. And there is one evidence, experimental too, which so grows and multiplies with the lapse of time, as may at length become palpable to themselves—not the evidence of our practical success, but of their own practical discomfiture. They have been attempting long, and are attempting still, their endless modifications on the Pauperism of England; but the radical and inherent mischief of the system is more and more every day making head against them, and preparing the way for a lesson which they should have learned long ago—that it is a system not to be regulated, but destroyed. They resolutely support, and we fear will be powerful enough to carry their own favourite scheme of Pauperism for Ireland; and the signal aggravation of all its miseries, which they will thereby bring on that unhappy land, must throw additional light upon the question. They are even tampering with the pure and virtuous economy of Scotland; and, one after one, have they immolated many of its parishes to a system, which is nowhere introduced without inflicting the sorest deterioration both on the comfort and character of families. Let us hope that this unfailing and oft-repeated experience will at length open their eyes. And as to experience we confide the verification of our very obnoxious doctrine on the subject of Pauperism—to the same do we confide the verification of our equally obnoxious doctrines on the subject of Political Economy at large. They are precisely such as admit of being thus tested, of being either ratified or refuted by the history of future years,—whether we affirm of a Poor Law, that, viewed as an expedient for the relief of

distress, it is a positive and unmixed evil; or of all the other merely economic expedients for the same object, not that they are evils, but that at best they afford only a fleeting and temporary good, soon to be neutralized by a cause, whose deadly mischief nothing else can countervail, save a thorough education of the people. Let all these expedients be tried, successively, or together, and what we have ventured to predict is, that none of them will avail for a permanent lightening of our pressure. It is not Home-colonization that will do it. It is not the largest practicable conversion of Revenue into Capital. It is not the greatest possible enlargement of Foreign Trade. It is not the Repeal of the Corn Laws. It is not the more equal division of Property. It is not the abolition of Tithes or Taxes. And, finally, it is not Emigration. We think that, beforehand, and by the lights of science, one and all of these measures are traceable to their results; and we have endeavoured so to trace them. In our conclusions, we have run counter to many of the fond imaginations of projectors. Experience will decide the question betwixt us; and whether, if without an extensive moral and educational reform, the future history of Britain—marked on the one hand, by the outbreakings of a straitened and distempered population—on the other, by the manifold, but abortive attempts of the Legislature to rectify their condition—will not lend a melancholy confirmation to all our views.

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SHOULD an influential journal pronounce an adverse judgment on the views of an author, it is possible that the cause of truth may suffer for a time—more especially in an age, when reviews are much, and books are little read. This will all the more surely happen, if the subject in question be a science of wide and multiplied combinations; presenting, even on the first slight and partial regards that we may chance to bestow upon it, many glances, or imposing likelihoods of truth, which can only be dissipated by a careful and comprehensive survey of the matter in all its bearings; and therefore requiring, for the adjustment of its controversies, a far more lengthened and laborious argumentation than is at all suited to the patience or the taste of ordinary readers. The peculiar danger in these circumstances is, either that they will take up with

the first plausibility which offers—or that, receiving their opinions upon trust, they will, at all hazards, prefer the brief sketch of the reviewer to the elaborate treatise of the author; and the more, that the proper vocation of the former is to be the guide of public sentiment, whereas the latter may either be comparatively unknown, or may have been guilty of a rash incursion on a science which does not belong to him.

The article in the Edinburgh Review, on a work entitled, "Political Economy in connection with the Moral State and Moral Prospects of Society," is written in an obvious spirit of kindness and good-will to its author. It is free of all asperity; and, in the absence of this distasteful ingredient, one can attend to its reasonings, without any of the moral discomfort that is incurred by the perusal of a coarse and boisterous invective. Our only discomfort is, that, in return for so much courteousness, we should, in justice to our subject, have to state any instance, in which the writer of it has either erroneously misconceived or inadequately represented us. He has been pleased to say of the work, that it is calculated to do extensive good, by the attention to its various and important topics which it must necessarily awaken. But it were too much to expect of any readers, that they should listen for a moment to an author, convicted either of ignorance or oversight in the first and fundamental principles of his reasoning; and far more, that they should accompany him on

a toilsome pathway, to those ulterior conclusions, in which he has either deviated from his predecessors, or gone beyond them—after they have been made to believe, on the authority of a journal high in talent and general reputation, that he is incompetent, and uninformed even in those simpler elements, which may be said to form the very alphabet of the science.

It is rightly stated in the review, that the great object of the work, is but the establishment *of one lesson*, or "one leading idea,"* even the superior importance of a Christian education, over every other expedient which the most enlightened Political Economy can devise, for a secure and permanent amelioration, in the condition of the labouring classes. But it is quite obvious, that this lesson cannot be fully or conclusively made out, without the satisfactory treatment of many other distinct lessons, which must, of necessity, go before it. A comparison is instituted between one thing and many things. But, to execute this aright, there must not only be a just estimate of the power and quality of the one thing whose superiority is affirmed; there must also be a just estimate of the power and quality of the many other things wherewith it is compared. And so there come to be as many distinct lessons, as there are acts of comparison. And, accordingly, for the execution of our task, the chief expedients which politicians or economists have proposed, for bringing about a

* Page 53 of the Review.

larger sufficiency in the state and circumstances of the general population, come successively under review; or, in other words, a wide survey must be taken of the leading doctrines in Political Economy. Doubtless, the concluding proposition is one; but it can only be arrived at by a series of anterior propositions. Or, to express it otherwise, there is in the work but one generic proposition; but it includes many special propositions, each of which requires to be discussed separately; and, in doing this, we have to pass from topic to topic, as distinct, the one from the other, as are the chapters which they respectively occupy. Of these topics, the reviewer has selected but a small number for special animadversion. We reserve for another place the adjustment of our differences on such matters as are strictly scientific;* restricting ourselves here, to the notice of any such misunderstandings, or errors, as may have arisen betwixt us, regarding the degree of *economic* importance which should be ascribed to the general and Christian education of the people.

But, before we begin our closer reckoning upon the subject, it may be right to notice one peculiarity, which serves to mark and to characterize the whole of the critic's performance. We mean the manner in which he keeps up the style and show of controversy, even on questions where we are substantially at one; so as often to hold forth the semblance of opposition, at the very time that

* See the Postscript.

there is no real or essential difference betwixt us. Perhaps the very nature of our leading proposition lays it peculiarly open to such a virtual misrepresentation; while the hurried way in which the reviewer hath obviously collected his brief and scattered notices of the work, makes it quite consistent with our firm belief, that no misrepresentation was intended. Our proposition is, the superiority of one expedient over all others, for the economic well-being of a community. We rejoice that, in a work of so much authority as the Edinburgh Review, this superiority is distinctly admitted; it being the frequently expressed sentiment of that journal, that "good education is at once the *best* security for the public tranquillity, and for the *permanent* improvement of the mass of the people."* After this, we are at a loss to perceive, how, on our main position, to which all the others are subservient, there can be the remnant of a controversy; save on the very indefinite charge, which, in every question of degrees, it is so easy to make, and so difficult, if not impossible, to settle—that we lay *too* much stress on education, or have formed *too* high a conception of its powers. But the superiority of one expedient, implies the inferiority of all others; and here the reviewer hath afforded us the advantage of a charge quite definite and precise in the terms of it; for, instead of ascribing to us too limited an opinion of the efficacy of these inferior expedients, he would have us to affirm that

* Page 53 of the Review.

they possess no efficacy at all. "Neither the repeal nor abolition of the most burdensome taxes or regulations, nor the discovery of new machines or processes for reducing the cost of production, can, in his estimation, be of any real service."*—Now it so happens, that not only have we zealously advocated these and many other measures of economical improvement and reform; but, in the estimate that we offer of the many important benefits which they render to society, we have had the good fortune to instance, and that repeatedly, as the most signal of them all, that which the reviewer also insists upon, and for the ostensible purpose, too, of supplementing our deficiency. After pleading for the removal of all taxes from the commodities which are in general use, we state the effect of such a reform to be, that "it lets forth the agriculture, instead of contracting it. The people are translated into better circumstances; and they may be taught in the season of intermediate abundance, to have a permanently higher demand for the enjoyments of life than before. They may be raised to a higher status; and of that status they may be enabled to keep the permanent occupation, in virtue of their higher standard of enjoyment. Were the economical only followed by a moral enlargement, then, instead of a brief evanescent holiday for the people of our land, the whole platform of humble life may be elevated, and made to sustain an erect, and independent, and prosperous commonalty, to the

* Page 54 of the Review.

most distant ages."*—Those successive enlargements, on which the reviewer expatiates at great length, and as if we had wholly overlooked them, are distinctly, and, on different occasions throughout the volume, pressed on the attention of the reader. "And this is a precious use of the enlargements which are still before us, and by which the families of the land are translated for a time from extreme misery into a state of comparative ease. They then become fitter subjects for education, than when sunk in the distress and desperation of abject poverty. When viewed in the light of absolute or ultimate resources, we have no great value either for the removal of prohibitions from the corn trade, or for the removal of tithes and taxes from agriculture, or, finally, for emigration. But when these expedients are viewed in the relation of subserviency to the education of the people, (because they afford a temporary lightening of the pressure that is now upon their families, and, along with this, a spirit, and a leisure, and a means, for their moral and literary culture,) in this light, they may prove of incalculable service to the good of humanity."†—It were not easy to discover where the difference lies upon this part of the subject, between the writer who could pen these sentences, and the writer who tells us of the beneficial effect of these enlargements in "the time that is afforded for the formation of those improved

* Page 296 of the Work. † Page 455 of the Work.

habits that are of such essential importance;"* and who, after describing the improvements which he supposes to have taken place in our land during the last half century, expresses his firm conviction, that their "beneficial influence would have been materially increased, had they been accompanied by an increase of moral culture;"† and, finally, who admits as at least highly desirable, if not indispensable "a good system of public instruction, operating simultaneously with a fall in the price of necessaries or a rise of wages."‡ With such common elements of thought, one might have looked for a better understanding between the parties. But, perhaps, it belongs to what may be termed the mannerism of the profession, that the reviewer should still be appearing to refute the sentiments of his author, at the very time that he only reiterates or re-echoes them; and it may be really as difficult for the former, to depart from the habitual attitude proper to his vocation of a censor and a judge, even when there is nothing to find fault with, as it is unfortunate for the latter, that, with a correction as indiscriminate as it is unsparing, he should be alike the object of hostility for the opinions which he does, and for those which he does not entertain.

This characteristic tendency of the reviewer, this continued maintenance on his part, of the air and general style of an adversary, even when there is no substantial ground for it, pervades, and, we

* Page 55 of the Review. † Page 64 of the Review.
‡ Page 71 of the Review.

doubt not, unconsciously to himself, the whole of his criticism; but is no where more remarkably exemplified, than in his treatment of the difference betwixt us, partly apparent, as we hope to show, and partly real, respecting the standard of enjoyment. It is strenuously affirmed in the review, and as if in opposition to the work, that the people of Scotland are better fed, clothed, and lodged, than they were in the days of their forefathers. With certain modifications, which we shall endeavour to supply, there is no mistake whatever in this assertion. The mistake lies in bringing it forward as corrective of any error into which we had fallen; an error, it is affirmed, which "has arisen from our laying too much stress on the principle of population, as explained by Mr. Malthus."* Now it so happens, that, instead of contrariety between the author and his reviewer upon this subject, there is the most precise and remarkable coincidence; for, at the outset of his work he combats this very error, and as the error too of those who did lay too much stress on the principle of population; or who, by reasoning on the element of population alone, had "given in to certain conceptions which required to be modified;"† and who, in consequence, described the process that took place in the history of the world to be such, as if, at each successive step, "the comfort and circumstances of the human race underwent de-

* Page 54 of the Review. † Page 3 of the Work.

terioration."* We expressly affirm of this process, that it "is not accordant with historical truth;"† and are at some pains to explain, in opposition to the ultra-Malthusians, why it was that we did "not witness throughout the various countries of the world the successive degradation of their peasantry"†—but rather, "a general march and elevation in the style of their enjoyments"—"an undoubted rise in their circumstances, or in the average standard of their comfort."† We afterwards speak of the gratifications which were placed by an opening and augmenting commerce, "within reach of the peasantry, and were every where raising the standard of enjoyment."‡ This is but one of those instances in which the reviewer hath fallen into the remarkable mistake, of reiterating the sentiments of the work, at the very time that he conceives himself employed in refuting them,—only to be accounted for on the theory of a hasty composition, after a very hasty and imperfect perusal.

But a mistake in regard to the meaning of an author, is of less consequence than a mistake in regard to the subject of which he treats. The standard of a people's enjoyment is made up of several elements; and one of the most essential of these, the reviewer has altogether neglected. He has taken account only of the larger maintenance of the people; he has taken no account of their now

* Page 3 of the Work. † Page 5 of the Work.
‡ Page 58 of the Work.

larger and greatly more aggravated labour. Had he given himself time for a fuller view of their common subject, it would have brought him and his author more thoroughly at one. We agree with him in thinking, that our workmen, on the whole, "live better;"* and if he will agree with us in thinking that they "labour more"* than their ancestors, then this part of the controversy might be altogether cancelled; and, respecting the "change of habit which has actually taken place in modern Europe,"* there might be a perfect community of sentiment betwixt us.

As this pamphlet may fall into the hands of some who may not have read the larger work, or are unwilling to encounter the labour of its perusal, we shall, in the following brief extract, put them in possession of our sentiments upon this subject.

"The actual and historical process that has taken place, we believe to be as follows. The labourers of our day work harder than before, but live better than before. They put forth more strength, and receive more sustenance than they wont to do. There has been an increase on both of these terms; or, such has been the change of habit among workmen, that while greatly more industrious, they at the same time have become greatly more luxurious. They at once toil more strenuously, and live more plentifully; putting forth more strength, but withal, drawing the remuneration of a larger and more liberal sustenance. This we apprehend to have been the actual change of habit and condition which has taken place with artizans and labourers, in all the countries of civilized Europe,—so that while, on the one hand, we behold a harder

* Page 15 of the Work.

working peasantry, we, on the other hand, behold them more richly upholden, both in the first and second necessaries of life.

"Now, this may be either a deterioration or an improvement in their circumstances. One can imagine a day of slavish fatigue, followed by an evening of gross and loathsome sensuality,—as is often exemplified in the life of a London coal-heaver, whose enormous wage is absorbed in the enormous consumption, by which he repairs the waste and the weariness of an excessive labour. This surely is not a desirable habitude for the commonalty of any land—nor do we read the characteristics of a high or a well-conditioned peasantry in a state of existence, made up, first of drudgery to the uttermost of their strength, and then of grovelling dissipation to the uttermost of their means. They spend one part of their revolving day in the exercise of powers which are merely animal; and the other part in the indulgence of enjoyments, which also are merely animal—like beasts of burden, who are better wrought than before, and, in return for this, are better fed and lodged and littered than before. They are now in better keep than their forefathers; and this puts them into heart for the greater work that is extracted out of them. Still it is conceivable of the work, that it may be so very extreme, as, on the whole, to degrade and to depress these overdone children of modern industry—and that, in spite of the greater abundance wherewith their senses and their spirits are coarsely regaled, during the intervals of their sore bondage."*

Had our reviewer, instead of the few slight touches which he has bestowed upon the subject, entered into its depths and its details, with a labour of examination somewhat more commensurate to its importance, it would have greatly qualified the flattering representation which he has given of what is going on at the basement of society.

* Pages 10–12 of the Work.

He would there have found a progressive accumulation of wretchedness; and that, too, from the constant increase of numbers which is taking place, year after year, in the *lowest class of labourers*—men who, if of more varied physical tastes than their forefathers, are, in that very proportion, at a more hopeless distance from a state of tranquil and satisfied enjoyment—more ravenously bent on animal gratifications than before; but forced, by overwhelming competition, so to labour for their attainment, as, on the whole, to have fallen greatly beneath the standard both of comfort and character that was realized by the peasantry of Scotland, amid the simpler and purer enjoyments, but withal the longer intervals, of repose, with the more frequent opportunities for reflection and reading, as well as social happiness, of a generation that has now gone by. Even though, in respect to the amount of *materiel* which entered into the use and consumption of their families, the computation was (what in many thousand instances it is not) entirely in their favour—when the extreme and oppressive drudgery of their over-worked callings is admitted into the reckoning, it will be found of a rapidly augmenting multitude in our land, that they are becoming every year lower economically, as well as lower morally and intellectually, than before. In other words, instead of British society resting on the goodly foundation of a more thriving and substantial peasantry than at any former period, there lies, concealed from the observation

of the reviewer, and underneath that platform which he has spread out before the view of his readers, a strength of profligacy and pauperism together; to reach and neutralize which, political economy can do no more than recal the blunders of its own erring disciples; and against which nothing will fully or conclusively avail, but the power of Christian education.

Such is our general representation, in opposition to that of the reviewer—substantiated by facts which he has not stated, and to be accounted for by reasons which he has entirely overlooked.

Of these facts, which could be multiplied without end, we deem it better to select one or two of the most decisive, instead of fatiguing the patience of our readers, by repeating the similar communications which might be had from all parts of the empire. The following is the statement of a gentleman most minutely and statistically acquainted with the subject of his narrative; and we hold it all the more valuable, that it is the testimony, not only of one who had the best opportunities of observation, but whose representation, being a plain record of circumstances, that might be verified by the experience of thousands, is unvitiated by any economic theory. We therefore offer no apology for presenting it in full.

"Paisley is perhaps the most plebeian town of its size in Europe—its population being composed chiefly of weavers, with such accompanying trades and occupations as are dependent upon, or necessary for, the supply of weavers and weav-

ing apparatus. From its proximity to Glasgow, Paisley can boast of few extensive manufacturers, many of its operatives being employed by Glasgow houses, through the medium of resident agents; and, having few home or foreign merchants of any note, it presents the extraordinary feature of an almost entire working population. As some important practical results, both of a moral and political nature, may be drawn from a review of its past and present history, it is our intention in the present article, to take a cursory view of the *weaving*, in other words, the general population of that town, from about the year 1775, or 80, to the present day; contrasting its moral and intellectual character at two or three distinct periods, and endeavouring to account for the sad declension in public manners, which, of late, has been so obvious to the country at large.

"To state the simple fact, that the *once* quiet, sober, moral, and intelligent inhabitants of Paisley, are now, generally, a turbulent, immoral, and half-educated population, is to state what almost every one knows, what many mourn over, but for which few seem able to propose any remedy.

"It is indeed a melancholy subject for contemplation, that what was at first eagerly embraced by many as an addition to their family receipts, has, ultimately, proved not only a chief cause of individual poverty, but of family feuds, insubordination on the part of the children, and, as a natural consequence, a general moral degradation over the whole community. We allude to the practice, introduced about the year 1800, (when the manufacture of imitation Indian shawls was first commenced,) of employing children as draw-boys, from the early age of five or six, to ten or eleven years,—a period of life, till then, uniformly spent in school, or in youthful amusements, but, subsequently, from a rapid increase in this branch, all the available children are employed in the weaving-shop.

"From about 1770 to 1800, the manufactures of silk gauzes and fine lawns, flourished in Paisley; as also, during a portion of this period alluded to, that of figured-loom and hand-tamboured muslin. These branches afforded to all classes excellent wages; and being articles of fancy, room was afforded for a display of taste, as well as enterprise and intel-

ligence, for which the Paisley weavers were justly conspicuous. Sobriety and frugality being their general character, good wages enabled almost every weaver to possess himself of a small capital; which, joined with their general intelligence and industry, enabled and induced many to spend days, and even weeks, together, in plodding over a new design; assisted frequently by his obliging neighbours, knowing that the first half-dozen weavers who succeeded in some new style of work, were sure to be recompensed ten-fold.

"Nearly one-half of Paisley, at that period, was built by weavers, from savings off their ordinary wages. Every house had its garden; and every weaver being his own master, could work it when he pleased. Many were excellent florists; many possessed a tolerable library, and *all* were politicians; so that, about the period of the French revolution, Mr. Pitt expressed more fear of the unrestricted political discussions of the Paisley weavers, than of 10,000 armed men. Had Paisley been then what Paisley is now, crowded with half-informed Radicals and Infidels, his fears would have been justified; but truth and honest dealing could fear nothing from a community constituted as Paisley then was; and never, perhaps, in the history of the world, was there a more convincing proof of the folly of being afraid of a universal and thorough education, especially when impregnated with the religion of the Bible, than in the state of Paisley at that period.

"At the period alluded to, every man, woman, and child above eight or nine years of age, could read the Bible; many could write and cast accounts; and not a few of the weavers' sons went through a regular course at the Grammar School. To have had a distant relative unable to read, or one sent to prison for stealing, would have been felt as equally disgraceful.

"The inhabitants were so universally regular in their attendance upon church, and strict afterwards in keeping in-doors, that it is recollected, at the end of the last century, or commencement of the present, that not a living creature, save two or three *privileged blackguards*, were ever seen walking the streets after divine service; or if any chanced to appear, an errand for the doctor was supposed to be the probable cause.

Family duties were generally attended to; and prayer and praise were not confined to the Sabbath evening; for on week-days, as well as on Sabbath days, the ears of the by-standers were regaled with songs of praise issuing forth from almost every dwelling; and, in those days it was no uncommon thing to find the highly respectable weaver a most consistent and truly useful elder of the church.

"At that period, the honest quiet *Whig* or *Tory* weaver, might be seen with his wife, at four or five o'clock, sallying forth on an evening walk, in full Sabbath attire; the husband, in advance of his wife, carrying the youngest child in his arms, and his wife following, with two, three, or four, older children; and, perchance, ere their return, a brother and sister-in-law were honoured with a visit to a cup of tea, to which they experienced a hearty welcome. Nor were little luxuries on such occasions altogether unknown; a weaver then being able to afford them.

"Although early marriages were very common, yet the frequent attendant evils were not immediately felt; a lad of 18 or 20 being quite as able to support a family as his father at 40; and he did not anticipate those days of darkness and privation, which have since come on Paisley.

"We come now to the mournful cause of the present degraded state of that once moral and happy town; not that we imagine that the fluctuations of trade, arising from the change from a war to a peace system, have not affected that town in common with others; but these fluctuations would have passed over it with comparatively little injury, but for the operative cause we are about to mention, which wrought its sure though silent influence upon the manners, habits, and morals, of the general population.

"The introduction of the manufactory of imitation Indian shawls, about the year 1800, required that each weaver should employ one, two, or three boys, called draw-boys. Eleven to twelve was the usual age, previous to this period, for sending boys to the loom; but as boys of any age above five were equal to this work of drawing, those of ten were first employed, then, as the demand increased, those of nine, eight, seven, six,

and even five. Girls, too, were by and by introduced into the same employment, and at equally tender years. Many a struggle the honest and intelligent weaver must have had, between his duty to his children and his immediate interests. The idea of his children growing up without *schooling*, must have cost him many a pang; but the idea of losing 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* per week, and paying school wages beside, proved too great a bribe even for parental affection, and, as might have been expected, *mammon* in the end prevailed, and the practice gradually became too common and familiar to excite more than a passing regret. Children grew up without either the education or the training which the youth of the country derive from the schoolmaster; and every year, since 1805, has sent forth its hundreds of unschooled and untamed boys and girls, now become the parents of a still ruder, more undisciplined, and ignorant offspring. Nor was this all. So great was the demand for draw-boys, that ever and anon the town-crier went through the streets, offering, not simply, 2*s.* 6*d.* 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week for the labour of boys and girls, but bed, board, and washing, and a penny to themselves on Saturday night. This was a reward on disobedience to parents—family insubordination, with all its train of evils, followed. The son, instead of standing in awe of his father, began to think himself a man, when he was only a brawling impudent boy. On the first or second quarrel with his father, he felt he might abandon the parental roof, for the less irksome employment of the stranger. The first principle of all subordination was thus early broken up; and the boy who refused to hearken to the voice of his father or his mother, and to honour them, could not be expected, when he became a man, to fear God, or to honour the king. If ignorance be the mother of superstitious devotion, it is also the mother of stupid and vulgar contempt. An intelligent and moral people, will ever be most ready to give honour where it is due; and, respecting themselves, will yield a willing respect to intelligence, virtue, rank, and lawful authority, wherever it is placed.

"The increase of the family receipts, arising from the employment of one or more children as draw-boys, ceased on the

first slackness in the demand; for it is evident that the additional sum, we shall suppose of 5*s.* a week, drawn by the labour of the weaver's children, enabled him to work just at so much lower prices to any manufacturer who might choose to speculate in making goods at the reduced price, in the hope of a future demand. A short period of idleness on the part of the weavers would have given time for the overstock of goods to clear off, whereas this practice of working even extra hours during the period of a glut, tended to perpetuate the glut, or to render fluctuations arising from this source more frequent, and, along with other causes, to perpetuate low wages. Thus was the employment of their children from five to ten, by the weavers of Paisley, at first an apparent advantage, but in the end a curse; demonstrating, that whatever may appear to be the interest of parents this year or next year, it is permanently the interest of them and their offspring to refuse every advantage in their temporal concerns, which tends to defraud youth of the first of parental blessings, EDUCATION, and that Providence has bound in indissoluble alliance, the intelligence, the virtue, and the temporal well-being of society. In 1818–19, during the Radical period, there were found full three thousand, Paisley-born and Paisley-bred, who could not read; and the decline of intelligence has been followed by the decline of that temperance, prudence, and economy, which are the cardinal virtues of the working classes; by which alone they can elevate their condition, or preserve themselves from sinking into the most abject poverty.

"The Paisley weaver of forty years ago married early, because he foresaw that he could, in decency, support a family, and even save something for sickness, or age, or the fluctuations of his trade. The Paisley weaver lad, in 1832, marries equally early, on a pittance that scarcely supports himself; because he has neither judgment to reflect on the misery which he is entailing on himself and others, nor moral principle to feel the solemn obligations of the state into which he is entering. Had the population of this town continued a well-educated, religious population, and, as wages diminished, intelli-

gence and virtue, had increased, the fall of wages would have been arrested by the natural operation of that prudence, which leads mankind to consult their duty as well as their inclinations; and, without any knowledge of the principles of Malthus, the operative classes would, like the middling and upper classes, have acted on his principles. It was the practice of the old Paisley weaver, after an attachment was formed, and an engagement entered into, to interpose sometimes a delay of years in the labour of collecting their *providing* or *plenishing*; that is, a most enormous mass of bed and table linen, an eight-day clock, &c. &c.; and it was a point of distinction on the day previous to marriage, by one or other of the parties, to exhibit to all the neighbours this accumulation of industry and economy. Will the clergy of Paisley inform us, how many marriages they now celebrate annually, where the parties have such *plenishing* to exhibit, with honest satisfaction, to their neighbours? Or rather, how many enter into the state of wedlock, without one thought of the future, and who know not, nor care not, what they do?

"Those who have no consideration concerning the things of this life, are not likely to have any forethought regarding the life to come; and just in proportion as the modern Paisley weaver is without religion, does he despise it. All clergy are necessarily hypocrites, as all kings and magistrates are, in their estimation, tyrants. Unitarianism, infidelity, or reckless profanity, too generally abound; and the popular cry is against all church establishments, however much demanded by the poverty and irreligion of their own town; and against all distinction of ranks. Thus, measuring themselves by themselves, they would reduce society to their own level. Paisley thus furnishes an affecting illustration of the declaration of Holy Writ, 'That righteousness exalteth a city; but sin is the ruin of any people.'"

We should have but injured the graphic power and fidelity of this precious document, by attempting to abridge it. We have therefore given it en-

tire.* Although rich in principle, a vast deal more of instruction may be gathered from the study of it, than we have immediate occasion for. The following are the only remarks which it is necessary for our purpose to offer:—

First, it will be seen, that the standard of enjoyment does not lie exclusively in the more plentiful use of those merely tangible articles of consumption which compose the maintenance of a household. The parent who treats himself every week with some holiday enjoyment—who appears regularly at church in his respectable Sabbath-day attire—who pays for seat-rents and schooling to his family—who, instead of consigning them almost from infancy to a life of slavish and severe labour, can afford them a free, happy, and well-educated boyhood,—such a man, even though his children may run bare-footed, and he himself lives on coarser fare, or in a more homely dwelling than would satisfy an English peasant—beside being greatly higher in the moral, should also have a higher place assigned to him in the economic scale. Still the reviewer is right in the virtue which he ascribes to

* That is, the writer's description of the present, as contrasted with the former state of Paisley. But he has subjoined to it a scheme of restoratives or remedies—all of which, as being moral remedies, are in perfect keeping with our main argument. It is right to add, that the narrative here given first appeared in a Glasgow newspaper, entitled 'the Scottish Guardian,' distinguished by its sound principles, and the able enforcement of them, both on ecclesiastical and economical subjects.

circumstances, though he has made his usual mistake, in supposing that we had not adverted to it. "The law, the commerce, the industry, the Protestantism, (even in a population destitute of schooling,) the advanced civilization, have elevated the habits and state of the general community in England."* Apart from the education of letters, there is an education of habits—not we mean the habits of religion or morality, but those of mere civilization, such as comfort, and cleanliness, and certain points of decorum, in which perhaps our Southern neighbours have still the precedency. The Scottish peasantry had the tastes and preferences of a higher sort—though rapidly falling, and more especially in towns, from this distinctive superiority. Even taking the standard of enjoyment in its grosser and more ordinary sense, we have just witnessed in one of these towns a most remarkable depression; and we shall presently see how far England, as well as Scotland, shares in it.

It is altogether a fair comparison which the reviewer hath instituted, between the education of circumstances, and the education of letters; but, had he taken a still more comprehensive survey of the question, he might have greatly strengthened the demonstration which he has given, of the impotency of the latter, when standing alone and unassociated with other influences. There is a third and a higher education than either of the other two—and that is, the education of principle.

* Page 410 of the Work.

It is obvious, from the narrative which we have just presented, that the descent which took place in the condition of the operatives in Paisley first began with a surrender of principle—the unworthy sacrifice of their children, for the sake of an immediate and tempting gratification. It is not reading, but reading as subservient to religion and morality, that elevates the economic state of a people. We fear that this principle has not only been omitted by the reviewer, but overlooked, nay contravened, by our rulers in high places—when enacting; with the most perfect honesty of intention, we trust, for the relief and amelioration of unhappy Ireland. There may be a superficial and apparent, but really there is no substantial analogy, between the system of education proposed for Ireland—and that which is still in vigorous operation throughout the country parishes of our own land. We look for no sensible or general improvement in character, and of course no secure or permanent improvement in their economic condition—"if that is merely to be the education of letters, and not the education of principle. It is not scholarship alone, but scholarship impregnated with religion, that tells on the great mass of society. We have no faith in the efficacy of mechanic institutes, or even of primary and elementary schools, for building up a virtuous and well-conditioned peasantry, so long as they stand dissevered from the lessons of Christian piety. There is a charm ascribed to the scholastic system of Scotland; and the sanguine

imagination is, that by importing its machinery into England and Ireland, it will work the same marvellous transformation there, on the character of their people, that was experienced amongst ourselves. But it is forgotten, that a warm and earnest Christianity was the animating spirit of all our peculiar institutions, for generations after they were framed; and that, wanting this, they can no more perform the function of moralizing the people, than skeletons can perform the functions, or put forth the faculties, of living men. The scholastic is incorporated with the ecclesiastical system of Scotland; and that, not for the purposes of intolerance and exclusion, but for the purpose of sanctifying education, and plying the boyhood of our land with the lessons of the Bible. The scholarship of mere letters might, to a certain extent, have diffused intelligence amongst the people; but it is mainly to the power and presence of the religious ingredient, that the moral greatness of our peasantry is owing."*

But recurring once more to the fond exaggerations of the reviewer, respecting the improvement which has taken place in the condition of the people, "and especially during the present century"†—we cannot imagine a more striking contrast between a high-coloured representation and a sober reality, than that which obtains in the present instance, between the speculation of the economist, and the plain, practical statement of

* Page 433 of the Work. † Page 57 of the Review.

the eye-witness. It makes no good evasion to say, that this is but an isolated example, taken from the history of one town, or one community. The reviewer is too well versant in the first elements of economic science, not to know—that if, in virtue of an over-proportion of people to their employment, its wages have fallen in any one place, a depression will be felt in all other places which have the like misfortune; so that if, notwithstanding this tendency to equalization of wages, the depression still continues, it can only arise from a similar over-population and distress, in all parts of the empire that are similarly situated. Neither is it a good evasion, to ascribe this phenomenon to the influx of Irish into the West of Scotland. It is not in flowering or fancy-work, or any of the finer manufactures, but in the departments of simple and unskilled labour, that the people of our own land are most exposed to the weight of their competition. The truth is, that the great mischief under which Paisley now suffers, has been chiefly, if not altogether, of home-growth; or rather, the decay which has fallen upon its working classes, is chiefly, if not altogether, by a home-process of degeneracy. Even in those cases where the competition of the Irish has been of most direct and manifest operation, as in simple weaving, or in the ruder kinds of hand and field labour, they have but aggravated those evils, which had their beginning in the recklessness of our own population; and, if not arrested, will have their fearful in-

crease, and at length their crisis of destruction and anarchy. It is the distinct exhibition of this in the history of Paisley and its manufactures, which makes the narrative that we have now quoted so peculiarly instructive—at once proving, that the distress is wholly resolvable into moral causes, and wholly irrecoverable but by moral remedies. Altogether it affords a striking verification, though only in miniature, of our doctrine of limits; and shows how little could be done, or rather how much the suffering would have been enhanced, either by the investiture of more capital, or the engagement of more labour, in a trade that had already exceeded the possibility of an adequate return for its outlays. A resolute moral principle on the part of workmen could alone have prevented the catastrophe. A like moral principle, and nothing else, can fully and permanently recover it.

In the labour of mere handiwork, or where the requisite skill could be easily attained, and at the expense of a very brief apprenticeship, the depreciation of wages has been still more general. The days were when the muslin weavers of Glasgow earned; and for lengthened periods too, from 20*s.* to 24*s.* and even 30*s.* a-week. But these days have not occurred for about twenty years; nor are they ever expected to return. The invention of the fly-shuttle, by which the work has become incomparably lighter, so far from brightening this prospect, has made it greatly more hopeless. It has now become a female employment; and the

competition is frequently so overdone, as to bring down the whole remuneration of an individual weaver, to the wretched pittance of 4*s.* or 5*s.* a-week. When so high as 8*s.* or 10*s.*, being about one-third of what had sometimes been earned twenty years before, the weavers rejoice as in a season of comparative prosperity; though often alternated by long and dreary intervals of depression, during which, to keep a family in existence, the strength of all its members is sometimes put to the severest requisition. Instances often occur, where the same loom is kept all the twenty-four hours in unremitting activity, the man and wife taking their turns at these labours of the midnight oil to relieve each other; and thus to make out, between them, one of those halcyon days, which, we are taught to believe, have shone with such peculiar brightness on our population since "the commencement of the present century," so as to be without a parallel in the previous history of Scotland.*

* We, twelve years ago, had occasion to explain at some length the peculiar hardships of the manufacturing population, in that their sufferings were aggravated by their very attempts to rise above them; when they strove to make up by the amount of their work for the deficiency of their wages. The following is a brief extract from an article contributed by ourselves to the 'Edinburgh Review,' before it had somewhat changed and modified its views on the subjects both of pauperism and population.

"If the price of labour is reduced, while at the same time it is paid according to its quantity, the workmen will naturally

We greatly wish that our reviewer had made himself acquainted with the details presented to

strive to make up by the latter what they lose in the former. It is in vain that a small fraction of the labourers be withdrawn, if they who remain shall, by increased application to their work, continue to throw off the same quantity of the article upon the whole. There may in this case be fewer workmen, but not less work than before; and, in such a state of things, it obviously requires a much larger reduction of hands ere the supply of their labour can be so far diminished, as that this stock of goods should clear away, and the demand of the consumer come again into contact with the work of the operative. So much is there in this cause, that when it was understood in Glasgow that the number of working looms was *only* reduced from eighteen to thirteen thousand, it was feared that the supply of work would still be as great as ever, and that the process of clearing away the piled and accumulated produce could not yet begin. In the meantime, there cannot be conceived a more cruel dilemma for the poor operative, than that, in eking out a subsistence for his family, he should thus overwork himself, and, by that miserable effort, should only strengthen the barrier that lies in the way of his final deliverance; that, for the relief of the present urgencies of nature, he should be compelled to put forth more than the strength of nature, and yet find, as the direct result of his exertion, a lengthening out of the period of his distress; that the necessity should thus be laid upon him of what may be called, a self-destroying process; accumulating, as he does, with his own hand, the materials of his wretchedness, and so annoying and overwhelming the earth with the multitude of his commodities, that she looks upon his offerings as an offence, rather than an obligation, and refuses to sustain him. Misery like this may appear singular in its origin; and, therefore, is it of importance to know that it is so frequent and extensive in its operation, as to be realized amongst us in the form of a periodic visitation, and often prolonged for months, or even for years, together—lest it should

public notice, by Dr. Kay's able pamphlet, on "The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes employed in the Cotton Manufacture in Manchester;" not the excogitations of any fanciful theory on either side of a question, but the sober realities of a minute and statistical survey. He would there have learned a juster estimate than he has himself given of the variations which have taken place in the standard of enjoyment; and may have become convinced, perhaps, of the inseparable dependence which a soundly economical, has on a soundly moral state of the community at large. More especially, it may have led him to admit another element into his computation of the standard of enjoyment, that would have most essentially affected, and, perhaps, entirely reversed, the conclusion which he has himself arrived at, even the magnitude of that labour by which all the higher feelings and faculties of the mind are overborne, and man is degraded into an animal, or rather, into a mere piece of living enginery, where the vital principle may be regarded as but the moving force, the bones and muscles, as the levers and traces of a peculiar mechanism. No wage, however liberal, for repairing the expenditure of human strength, can reconcile us to the forfeiture of all human comfort and dignity that must be incurred by those wretched

be left to pine in neglect, or, what is still worse, should be aggravated by mischievous and misjudging interferences."—*Edin. Review*, Vol. xxxiii. pages 387, 388.

victims of modern industry, of whom we have an account in the sickening representation that follows :—

"The population employed in the cotton factories rises at five o'clock in the morning, works in the mills from six to eight o'clock, and returns home for half an hour or forty minutes, to breakfast. This meal generally consists of tea or coffee with a little bread. Oatmeal porridge is sometimes, but of late rarely used, and chiefly by the men; but the stimulus of tea is preferred, and especially by the women. The tea is almost always of a bad, and sometimes of a deleterious quality; the infusion is weak, and little or no milk is added. The operatives return to the mills and work-shops until twelve o'clock, when an hour is allowed for dinner. Amongst those who obtain the lower rates of wages, this meal generally consists of boiled potatoes. The mess of potatoes is put into one large dish, melted lard and butter are poured upon them, and a few pieces of fried fat bacon are sometimes mingled with them, and but seldom a little meat. Those who obtain better wages, or families whose aggregate income is larger, add a greater proportion of animal food to this meal, at least three times in the week: but the quantity consumed by the labouring population is not great. The family sits round a table, and each rapidly appropriates his portion on a plate, or they all plunge their spoons into the dish, and with an animal eagerness satisfy the cravings of their appetite. At the expiration of the hour, they are all again employed in the work-shops or mills, where they continue until seven o'clock, or a later hour, when they generally again indulge in the use of tea, often mingled with spirits, accompanied by a little bread. Oatmeal or potatoes are however taken, by some, a second time in the evening."

—— "The population nourished on this aliment is crowded into one dense mass, in cottages separated by narrow, unpaved, and almost pestilential streets, in an atmosphere loaded with the smoke and exhalations of a large manufacturing city. The operatives are congregated in rooms and workshops during twelve hours in the day, in an enervating, heated atmosphere,

which is frequently loaded with dust or filaments of cotton, or impure, from constant respiration, or from other causes. They are engaged in an employment which absorbs their attention, and unremittingly employs their physical energies.* They are drudges who watch the movements, and assist the operations of a mighty material force, which toils with an energy ever unconscious of fatigue. The persevering labour of the operative must rival the mathematical precision, the incessant motion, and the exhaustless power, of the machine.

" Hence, besides the negative results—the total abstraction of every moral and intellectual stimulus—the absence of variety —banishment from the grateful air, and the cheering influences of light, the physical energies are exhausted by incessant toil, and imperfect nutrition. Having been subjected to the prolonged labour of an animal—his physical energy wasted—his mind in supine inaction,—the artizan has neither moral dignity, nor intellectual nor organic strength to resist the seductions of appetite. His wife and children, too frequently subjected to the same process, are unable to cheer his remaining moments of leisure. Domestic economy is neglected; domestic comforts are unknown. A meal of the coarsest food is prepared with heedless haste, and devoured with equal precipitation. Home has no other relation to him than that of shelter, few pleasures are there; it chiefly presents to him a scene of physical exhaustion, from which he is glad to escape. Himself impotent of all the distinguishing aims of his species, he sinks into sensual sloth, or revels in more degrading licentiousness. His house is ill furnished, unhealthy, often ill ventilated, perhaps damp; his food, from want of forethought and domestic economy, is meagre and innutritious; he is debilitated and hypochondriacal, and falls the victim of dissipation."†

" * A gentleman, whose opinions on these subjects command universal respect, suggests to me, that the intensity of this application is exceedingly increased by the system of paying, not for time, but according to the result of labour."

† Dr. Kay's Pamphlet, pages 8–11.

But there is a discrimination to be made here, between one set of these wretched beings and another, which, had it occurred to the reviewer, might have helped him to a sounder conclusion respecting the actual standard of enjoyment among labourers. We shall explain it to the reader, as it will both extricate him from the delusion into which our critic hath been betrayed, and enable him, as we shall afterwards see, to account for the existence of it.

There is a distinction commonly made by economists between the remunerations due to unskilled and to skilled labour—the one often greatly inferior, as being simply a recompense for the exertion of muscular strength; whereas, over and above this, the other is a recompense for acquired dexterity, beside including in it a return for the time spent in making the acquirement. This partly explains the difference of wage between a hand-loom weaver, and a cotton-spinner, but it is far from being an adequate explanation of the whole difference.

The difference lies greatly, and we think principally, in this:—In the weaving department, the outlay of the master manufacturers consists entirely of wages; or if, to be extremely accurate, we include in the sum given to the operatives, the replacement and profit of the capital vested in the looms, they are the operatives themselves, generally speaking, who advance this capital, and who would bear all the loss of its becoming unproductive, during the cessation of work. Now the re-

verse of this obtains in cotton-spinning. The humble machinery of a hand-loom belongs generally to the workman, or at least, which is the same in effect, not to his employer. The ponderous and expensive machinery of a cotton-mill does belong to the employer. He makes a partial outlay in wages, but a prodigious outlay in capital. Let us suppose him to be the proprietor of an establishment, on which he has embarked a capital of twenty thousand pounds; and has, farther, to make a yearly advance of wages to a hundred individuals. According to a common estimate on the subject of manufacturing capital, he would need to have ten per cent. or two thousand a year, to repay him for the first outlay; so that, should there be a strike among his workmen, he not only foregoes all the profits that might still remain to him, even though he submitted to their terms, but he incurs a loss at the rate of two thousand a year into the bargain. His capital, while it remains dead and useless, is, for the time at least, as good as taken away from him; and it is in the power of workmen, at all times, to inflict this calamity upon their employer. When they stand out for a rise of wages, it must with him be a serious question, Whether he should not submit to their terms, and give, for example, an additional thousand in wages, rather than lose double that sum upon his machinery, and quit besides, all hope or possibility of gain, from that profession, on which perhaps he has embarked his all, and from which he draws his livelihood. Whe-

ther matters proceed to a combination, and a manifesto, and a strike, on the part of workmen or not —these are considerations which are at all times of influential effect, in determining the rate of wages; and in every manufacture where a large fixed capital is required, they do give to workmen a strong virtual control over the masters who employ them. In weaving, the loss incurred by the cessation of work, and therefore the stagnation of capital is small, and falls upon the workman; in cotton-spinning it is large, and falls upon the employer.

This gives rise to a very wide and distant variety in the circumstances and condition of different classes of operatives. In Glasgow, when the weavers earn only 5*s.* a week, the cotton-spinners may earn between 20*s.* and 30*s.* In the present year, it appears from the valuable Statistical Enumerations of Dr. Cleland of Glasgow, that the cotton-spinners have, in some instances, been earning 28*s.* a week. The principle is perhaps most distinctly and strikingly exemplified of all—when the wage of an operative, working at his own hand-loom, is brought into juxtaposition with that of an operative working among the power-looms of his master: when the earnings of the former amount to 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week, the earnings of the latter may be from 20*s.* to 25*s.*

Although Dr. Kay is inclined perhaps to ascribe too much to a temporary, without adverting to the permanent cause, for this difference in the wages

—yet, for the sake of farther confirming the fact, that such a difference exists, we take the liberty of presenting one extract more from his instructive little work.

"The wages obtained by operatives in the various branches of the cotton manufacture are in general such, as, with the exercise of that economy, without which wealth itself is wasted, would be sufficient to provide them with all the decent comforts of life—the average wages of all persons employed in the mills (young and old) being from nine to twelve shillings per week. Their means are too often consumed by vice and improvidence. But the wages of certain classes are exceedingly meagre. The introduction of the power-loom, though ultimately destined to be productive of the greatest general benefit, has, in the present restricted state of commerce, occasioned some temporary embarrassment, by diminishing the demand for certain kinds of labour, and, consequently, their price. The hand-loom weavers, existing in this state of transition, still continue a very extensive class; and though they labour fourteen hours, and upwards, daily, earn only from five to seven or eight shillings per week."*

We might collect innumerable testimonies from England, on the distempered state of its operative population. But we shall only instance the almost universal cry from its manufacturing districts, in behalf of the Factory Bill—a cry extorted from a suffering population, by the monstrous evils which that measure promises, but we fear vainly promises, to remedy. It is a wretched principle on which to compute the standard of enjoyment—merely to make arithmetical computation of the whole gains

* Dr. Kay's Pamphlet, pages 26, 27. See Evidence of Joseph Foster before the Emigration Committee, 1827.

of a family; and that without any discount or deduction for the enormity, unheard of till these modern times, of children from nine years old, and upwards, doomed to fourteen hours every day of confinement and hard labour, amid the dust, and the steam, and the dizzying sounds, of a crowded manufactory. It is a melancholy outlook for the next generation, that, with so large a portion of England's boyhood, the first openings of moral and intellectual nature should thus be subjected to the killing influences of a base and brutalizing servitude. Mr. Sadler has done good, by the appalling disclosures to which his investigations have given birth; as every man does, who adds to our store of facts on any question that is interesting to humanity. But, with all his benevolence and rectitude of purpose, we dare hardly hope for any further services from his hands. That is truly a bungling legislation, which seeks to obtain its object by what mathematicians would term, a compensation of errors; which, on the one hand, would, by the artificial influence of a poor-law, foster population—and, on the other, by the artificial restraint of a penal statute, would lay oppressive interdict on the unavoidable consequences of its excess. And so its proposal now, is to violate the parental rights of the people of England; and this to neutralize its own unhappy blunder—of having lured them, in supernumerary thousands, into the parental relationship, by the hope, which it can never realize—or rather, by the engagement, which

it never can make good—of indefinite harbourage and support for all actual and all possible families.

On this question, too, our doctrine of limits receives a signal illustration. Mr. Hoole, in his letter to Lord Althorp, tells him, that,

"If Mr. Sadler's bill becomes a law, the masters will have the choice of two evils. Either they must reduce the hours of labour to the limit proposed to be fixed for children, (fifty-eight hours per week,) or they must place their establishments without the pale of this enactment, by discharging all persons under eighteen years from their factories."—"In the former case, a reduction of the *wages* of all persons employed, whether children or adults, corresponding with the reduction of the time of labour, must inevitably take place."—"Not a few of the master cotton-spinners have determined to adopt the other course above mentioned; namely, to *discharge* from their employment all the hands under eighteen years of age, as soon as the proposed law comes into operation."

It is thus that England, with her ever-teeming philanthropy, has placed herself in a dilemma that seems inextricable—in what is familiarly termed, *a cleft stick*. After that capital has done its uttermost for the population, we find the latter borne down by the oppressive weight of their own numbers, and in the midst of intolerable grievances. When, for the redress of these, law would put forth its coercions, capital is then forced to look to itself, and threatens to cast off into utter idleness and destitution, those in whose behalf the state is now called on to interpose, for their protection from a system of grinding and oppressive labour. We are aware of the economic reforms, by which both ca-

pital and population may, for a brief season, be relieved of their difficulties; but to be again brought, if there be no moral regeneration in the country, into the very state of distress and extremity in which we now behold them. Meanwhile, we fear, that law can do nothing, unless by going to the root of the mischief; or instituting a right system of education, and putting into a train of abolition the whole system of pauperism. It cannot force labourers to live without wages; it cannot force capitalists to trade without profit. But law, overlooking these truisms, attempts to make bricks without straw; and, in its vain endeavours to effect an adjustment between the two classes, would lay this Egyptian bondage upon both.

But let us return once more to Scotland; and lest the argument, either of special manufactures, or of midway transitions from one state to another, should be alleged, in opposition to all our former instances—we shall now offer a brief view of the circumstances of our agricultural population, at the beginning of this century, and in the present day—assuming that the variation which has taken place in one of its counties, (Peebleshire,) is a fair average specimen of the change, if any, which the condition of our peasantry has undergone, over the whole length and breadth of the land. We, on purpose, keep clear of 1800 and 1801, as having been two years of severe scarcity, amounting to famine; so that the comparison, strictly speaking, is between the rate of wages now, and the mean rate of wages from 1802 to 1812 or 1814.

The wages of married farm servants—in as far as they are paid in kind, consisting of meal, potatoes, the keep of a cow, and driving of their fuel—have suffered no variation. The money wages at the former period were £16 a year; they are now £10. We are aware that the price of the first necessaries of life has fallen in a greater proportion than this; but the money part of this wage goes to the purchase of second necessaries; and their price has not fallen in so great a proportion. So that the labourers of this description are somewhat worse off at the latter than the former period.

The wages of unmarried farm-servants were then £18, with their victuals, and are now £12, with victuals; they having suffered a descent too, though less by 13*s.* 4*d.* than that of the former class of labourers.

But there is still another class, of inferior condition to the two former, and who also, as appears from the comparison of their wages at the two distinct periods, have sustained a greater descent than either of them—we mean the day-labourers, the job-men of England, or the *orry* men of our own country parishes, employed in the construction and repair of roads, and all the other varieties of ground labour. About twenty or twenty-four years ago, their allowance was from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week, with victuals, or from 16*s.* even to 18*s.* and 20*s.* a week, without victuals. Their allowance at present is 6*s.* a week with, and 10*s.* without victuals. But these numbers exhibit in both cases the full summer al-

27215

lowance; and, to estimate their yearly income, we must take into account the reduction of 1*s.* and 2*s.* a week, when the days become shorter, as also the average of about two winter months, when they are totally without employment. A good practical test of the felt straitness in their circumstances, is the extreme fatigue they will undergo at piece-work, when, to eke out a sufficiency for their families, they are known to labour from four in the morning to eight at night; and it is the distinct testimony of the masters who employ them, that this is what these daysmen will do now, and would not have done twenty-five years ago. We might further state, that the services of a man, with two horses and single horse carts, could only be had at that time for 10*s.* or 12*s.* a day—but now for 5*s.* or 6*s.* 6*d.* Wrights and masons, in short, all country artizans, with the exception of blacksmiths, have experienced a similar decline of wages; and a decline not countervailed by the greater cheapness of the second, and still greater cheapness of the first necessaries of life. By the general consent of practical and intelligent men, the peasantry of Scotland have not, at this moment, the same command over the various articles which enter substantially into the maintenance of families, that they had during the ten first years of the present century.

Two causes may be assigned for the glowing exaggerations of the reviewer, respecting the progress which he affirms to have taken place in the econo-

mic state of our people. It may be right that we advert, though briefly, to both of them—as they not only seem to have misled him, but are fitted to mislead many others, who are satisfied to make up their minds on a rapid and cursory view of the subject. The sketch which he has drawn of the internal state and history of Scotland, is one of great plausibility—yet it will not be difficult, we are persuaded, to evolve the actual state of the case, the sober reality of the question, from underneath that mantle of speciousness wherewith he hath garnished and overlaid it.

The first great error of the reviewer, then, lies in this—that he has generalized workmen of all sorts and varieties into but one object of contemplation. He has viewed them only *en masse*, without having adverted to the momentous distinction which obtains between one class of them and another—between the men, for example, of high wages, in virtue of the control which they have over their employer, because they can at any time bring his large and expensive machinery to a stand; and the men who often have not a third part of the wages of the others, because they possess no such power—as weavers, all whose capital is a hand-loom, which is their own; or ground labourers, all whose capital is a spade, which is their own also. He reasons, as if the foundation on which society rested, was throughout of homogeneous materials: and then tells us, what a substantial foundation it is, and how it is consolidating every year into

greater strength and firmness than before. We reason, as if that foundation was made up of successive strata, and express our apprehension that the lowest stratum of all might become every year more putrid and unsound, and so endanger the stability of the whole fabric. The work recognizes a gradation in the branches of regular industry; and takes account of a large and ever-increasing body of supernumeraries at the bottom of the scale. The dashing generality of the reviewer does not admit of such discrimination. It confounds the cotton-spinner of 28*s.* with the poor weaver of 5*s.* a week. It takes so distant a view of the object, that it comes not within sight of details and distinctions—though, in the instance on hand, of vital importance to all correct reasoning on the present state and future prospects of society. Like an unobservant by-passer through some plebeian district of a city, who never once dreams of the mighty gradation from the highest to the lowest of its house-holders—though, intermingled with, or even contiguous to each other, the artizan or manufacturing operative, of from 20*s.* to as much as 50*s.* a week, may be found in close juxtaposition with the weaver or the labourer, who but realizes an humble fraction of his gains. He overlooks this, and lumps or amalgamates them all, under the one denomination of the common people. And so, whatever comes from that quarter to the savings bank; or whosoever, out of the mighty hosts who congregate there, shall attend a mechanics' insti-

tute—he puts it all down to the general, or rather the universal elevation, that has taken place in the habits and comforts of those who overspread the ground-floor or basement of society. It is thus, that, in very proportion to the rapidity, the reckless, but withal confident, rapidity of those slight and transient regards which our reviewer has cast upon the subject—does he overrate, and that prodigiously, not the improvement of the lower, but the improvement of the lowest orders. He exults in the fifteen millions of deposits to the provident banks of the country; but reflects not on that multitude of mere labourers—the hundreds of thousands, who compose a distinct and inferior class, that are every year multiplying upon our hands, and who contribute not so much as one farthing to them. He has not entered at all into the depths or statistics of his subject; he has but looked on the upper surface of it—or, if reasoning on a sort of general average between the most comfortable and the most degraded of the industrious classes, reflects not, that beneath that average there is a gathering mischief, the inevitable tendency of which is to undermine the stablest community on earth, and to bring down the prosperity of all its orders.*

* It is of importance to keep in mind, that the worst paid of our manufacturing labourers in Glasgow are the most numerous. The number of workers, of all ages and both sexes, in the cotton and weaving mills of that city and neighbourhood, was 10,897, in April 1832. We wish that we could state the num-

There is nothing that we have been more anxious to set forth throughout the whole course of our reasonings, than the effect even of a small excess in the labour-market, to ensure a great and general reduction in the circumstances and sufficiency of the whole body of labourers. The very existence of an order of men in the country, willing to live and to propagate on the most wretched fare and miserable wages, is first felt in the grade immediately above them, and at length extends through all the departments of industry. Whether the degradation of their tastes and habits arises from a stupid or a profligate recklessness, so long as it subsists, they will hang as a dead weight on the rear of society, and with a depressing power on the comfort and status of those who are above them. The operation is palpable, when brought about by the immigration of Irish labourers, though only amounting to a small fractional part of the working population in Britain; but it is not considered, that, by a home process, and through the neglected education of our own peasantry, the same effect is sure to follow on the undue multiplication of families among ourselves. Apart from foreign influences altogether, there are causes at work within the island, which, if not met and counteracted, will issue in a grievous and general descent of wages, though not an Irishman should land upon our

ber of hand-loom weavers at the same period. But as far back as 1820, the number of hand-looms was upwards of eighteen thousand.

shores. There is a growing host of supernumeraries throughout the parishes of England, and in Scotland too, who overhang with a perpetual influence the labour market, and give a constant advantage to the employers of labour in all their negotiations with workmen; though it may only become manifest on those occasions, when, by means of the extra hands which can be so easily procured, they break the force, whether of righteous or unrighteous combinations. Now, the question is, whether shall we transform these modern Helots, which can only be done by a universal and Christian education, or shall we trust to the expedients of political economy alone; some of which, as the poor-law of England, and its home-colonizations, have only the effect of strengthening their habits, and perpetuating, nay, multiplying, their numbers. It is because of our distrust in all the resources of political economy, and our faith in the omnipotence of moral causes, both of which we have attempted, throughout the work in question, to vindicate, that we felt the conclusion to be inevitable, (a conclusion not at all shaken we think by the arguments of the reviewer,) that nothing will save the commonalty of a land from further degradation, or sustain them in prosperity and comfort, but a resurrection of better habits. And this can only be achieved and made effectual, by an operation on mind and manners, reaching even to the meanest of the people.

The delusion into which the reviewer has fallen,

by blending all the grades and varieties of common people into one general object of contemplation, has misled or bewildered the public mind on two great questions. In the question of pauperism, the apprehension is, that if the supplies of the existing system were done away, there would be nothing to replace them; and, in particular, that destitute families in the deep recesses of a city population, surrounded on all hands by others about as destitute as themselves, and placed beyond the observation and effective sympathy of those who had the power to relieve them, would inevitably perish. This is a very natural fear; but it proceeds on the imagination, that every plebeian district of a town is a dead level, of equal, unmixed, unalleviated, want and wretchedness. It is not recollected, how much *can* be done in every little neighbourhood by an internal operation of charity; and how much *would* be done, were it not that, by the attempt of law to supplement and supersede humanity, this operation has been paralyzed. We have to record it as our experience, after the close and personal observation of years, that never did a case of distress occur in the midst of a large and congregated mass of operatives, which was not followed up by the timely outbreakings of sympathy from the contiguous families; and, therefore, as our persuasion, that were human want confided to human benevolence alone, it would experience a far more copious, as well as kindly, circulation of relief, than is poured upon it from without, by the ministrations of a legalized charity.

But if this habit of looking at things in the gross is fitted to mislead in regard to the economical, it is equally fitted to mislead in regard to the ecclesiastical, state of the people. If, from those quarters of the town which are occupied by the working classes, we behold a goodly attendance on mechanic schools, we augur well as to their general intelligence; and if, from the same quarter, we behold a goodly number issuing forth to their places of worship at the sound of the Sabbath-bell, we augur well as to their general Christianity. It is only by a laborious and statistical investigation, that those pleasing illusions are dissipated; and we come to the mortifying discovery of a vast and rapidly increasing multitude beyond the reach of both the literary and the religious institute—more fixed and irreclaimable every year in hopeless ignorance and hopeless heathenism. We speak in round numbers, but so as to understate the magnitude of this sore degeneracy. Of the ten thousand people in Glasgow, whom we did take account of, there might at least have been six thousand church goers. The actual number in attendance, on all places of worship, did not amount to three thousand.* Or, in other words, more than one-half of the people lived in habitual alienation from the decencies and observances of a Christian land. Let us now see

* Our survey included a population of 10,304. The number of Sabbath hearers ought to have been 6,240. The number of seats actually taken in all the churches and meeting-houses put together, was 2,930.

how this bears on the question of a religious establishment. If, without the peculiar resources of such an economy, the whole country may be supplied with Christian education on the system of voluntary churches—how is it that the immense suburb wastes of our commercial and manufacturing towns have not been overtaken? The field is open to the enterprise of all; yet beyond the limit at which the people are willing to erect a church and maintain a minister for themselves, it has not been entered on. It is on the needs and the exigencies of this outfield population, that the great argument both for a scholastic and a religious establishment rests. We would help on, both to common and to Christian scholarship, those of whom it is experimentally found that they will not help themselves. For their sake we desire an establishment; and would move in a direction the opposite of those who now meditate and would exult in its overthrow. Instead of consenting to its extermination, or even its abridgment, we would multiply its churches, and greatly subdivide its parishes.

But to return from this digression. The second great error of the reviewer, respects the enlargement which he affirms to have taken place in the economic state of the people of Scotland. He tells us of a rapid and remarkable advancement, without the influence of a better education too—and "especially during the present century."* Now, in this latter period, which he has selected, as one

* Page 57 of the Review.

of extraordinary progress and prosperity, if the circumstances of our peasantry have experienced a change at all, they have suffered a decline; or at least, if stationary, this is the best which can possibly be said of them. All the testimonies which he has quoted in support of his own reasonings on this point, refer to the latter half of the last century, when Scotland did experience one of the most sudden transitions that ever took place in the internal economy of a nation—but such a transition, as, instead of being unfavourable or adverse to any theory of ours, is most strongly and strikingly corroborative of all our views. The truth is, that Scotland, during that brief period, and within her own narrow limits, exhibited, in epitome, the great movement which took place in Europe, between the middle and the modern ages. In a single generation, she may be said to have run the history of two centuries. The sudden start taken by her population, when the capabilities of her soil began to be unlocked after the rebellion of 1745; the almost impetuous career of her agriculture,* and,

* There is a number of random assumptions on the part of the reviewer, which, for the sake of brevity, we omit to dwell upon. One example of this is his conclusion, from a sixfold produce, and only a double population for Scotland, that its labourers must therefore be in three times easier circumstances. He further misconceives wherein it is that the essence of good government mainly consists—not in the soundness of its political economy, but in its protection of the rights of property as constituted by law. Though Turkey had no commercial code whatever, still it would have a bad government—and the go-

commensurate with this, the improvement which took place in the habits and condition of her peasantry; the awakening of the people from sloth to labour; the gradual augmentation of this labour to the present times, when the husbandry of our land begins to feel the impediments of its so much nearer approach to the extreme limit, and, along with this, our labourers begin to feel the impediments of a stationary and straitened condition; the obvious difference to the worse between the last and the present generation, in that, what then was prosperous without being oppressive industry, is now becoming the slavish and severe drudgery of men sinking under the competition of their own numbers, and who, therefore, have to put forth all their strength, in order to preserve the comfort which they have now acquired a taste for, and to maintain

vernment of England is essentially good, in spite of all the economical blunders by which its code may be disfigured. The difference between a good and bad government is, that up to the existing limit of their produce and resources, the people are or are not in a state of secure enjoyment. The difference between a good and bad political economy is, that the limit is widened under the former, and contracted under the latter. We may further observe, that the increase which he affirms to have taken place in the average length of human life, causes all the moral and prudential checks to be more imperiously called for; and lastly, that even though the people should have a larger amount of physical gratifications than in the days of their forefathers, yet if, along with this, habit have made their physical wants and appetites relatively greater than before, they may feel any addition of poverty or pressure more intolerable now than in any former period of their history.

their wonted status in society :—all these hold out, in forcible representation, first, the indispensable dependence which the progress of wealth has on the progress of agriculture; and at length the difficulties which lie in the way of further augmentation—difficulties which are sure to increase, in proportion as any country advances towards that impassable barrier, which nature and necessity have laid in all countries, both on the food and population of the world.

The mistake of the reviewer, in his reasonings on the economical history of Scotland, is in perfect analogy with the mistake of those writers who reason in precisely the same way, on the process of transition from the middle to the modern ages of Europe, as if it were to be a continuous and universal process for all ages. They forget the wide difference between the state of things at the commencement, and after the full establishment and continuance of this new era. At the former period, the passion for wealth and luxury, then newly awoke, found a soil of boundless and yet unentered capabilities on which to expatiate; and the spirit of mercantile adventure on the one hand, and the unsated appetite of the landlords on the other, met, in the before untouched resources of the land, with the means of extended gratification. But it follows not, because of the progress that was actually described, at the time when large additional products could still be extorted from a soil whose capabilities had scarcely been entered

on, that this progress may still be looked for, when agriculture, with its stationary, or slowly receding limit, has either reached, or is so much nearer, the uttermost limit to which it can be carried. The propelling force is in contact now, with an obstacle which stood then at a distance so remote, as to have permitted an advancing movement, and that a tolerably free one, for several centuries. But what happened in the incipient, cannot happen over again, in Scotland or any other country on the face of the earth, in the extreme state of agriculture; and accordingly, in the oldest and richest countries of Europe, the sanguine, the splendid anticipations which the earlier experience had awakened, checked and chastised as they have been by the later experience, are now beginning to be abandoned.

The economical progress described by Europe at large, in two or three centuries, has been described by Scotland almost *per saltum*, or at least in one or two generations. The progressive state, so well represented by Smith, as the hearty and prosperous state for all classes of society, and more especially for labourers, which in some countries began so early, as now to have lasted for nearly half a millennium, has been described in Scotland with such large and rapid strides, that she has overtaken all her neighbours in half a century. Those blessings and benefits of *progress*, which have been dealt out so gradually to the rest of the civilized world, have here followed so speedily and closely on each

other, as to have been condensed into a sort of quintessence for the people of Scotland. But, notwithstanding, we are now palpably beginning to participate in the difficulties of other lands; and it were as absurd to found our anticipations of the future on our recollections of the past, as to predict, for any of the old countries of Europe, the same mighty enlargement that we so confidently look for in the countries of the new world.

There are two distinct standards of enjoyment, both of them equally base and equally undesirable —the one, that which obtains ere the race of improvement commences; the other that, in which, after the acquisition of many new tastes and appetencies, the race of improvement too often terminates. We have already offered a description of the latter;* and the former we now present in the following extract:—

"If this be the extreme to which the workmen of our present day are now tending, there is an extreme opposite to this, from which men only began to emerge at the outset of civilization, and which is still realized among barbarous and demi-barbarous nations. We advert to the sordid condition of those, whom nought but the agonies of hunger can impel to shake off an indolence that is else unconquerable; and who, as soon as they have satisfied its cravings, lapse again into the rooted and habitual lethargy of their nature. If they have but enough of sleep, and enough of surfeiting, they care for no higher gratification—nor will they make one effort, above that level to which they subside, by the weight of their own constitutional sluggishness. Food of some description or other they must

* Pages 23 and 24.

have,—but having it, they are pleased to live in filth and nakedness, and nearly in utter want of all the secondary accommodations. It is obvious, of such a people, that so long as they abide in this habit, the inferior soils of the earth never will be reached by them. It is even possible that they may stop short at the very first and most fertile of the land; and never taste of that abundance, which is within their reach, just because of their insuperable aversion to the labour of extracting it. It is thus that they might doze away their existence, on the surface of an earth, whose dormant capabilities they never enter upon—and in vast territories, capable of sustaining millions over and above the few stragglers by whom they are occupied, both cultivation and population may, just because of this moral barrier, have been fixed and limited for many centuries."*

Never was the interval, from the one of these extremes to the other, more rapidly described by the people of any country than by those of Scotland. Traces of the earlier habit are still discernible, in the more remote and outlandish parts of our territory. But, in all the more populous and modernized districts, the people are descending in multitudes to the latter habit—now established in our cotton mills, and extensively prevalent both among the weavers in our towns, and the day-labourers in our country parishes. The testimonies of the reviewer apply to a period when our workmen, by an increasing, but not yet excessive labour, earned their new and rapidly increasing enjoyments. The competition of their growing number, has now somewhat stinted their enjoyments; and, at all events, is aggravating their labour into a cruel and oppressive bondage. Never

* Pages 12 and 13 of the Work.

will they reach the proper dignity of man, till they have reached the condition, not of higher wages only, but of higher wages and less work; an eminence fully accessible we think, but only by dint of prudence and principle among themselves—lessons which never will be diffused and obtain a practical establishment throughout the land, save on the vehicle of the people's Christianity, and in conjunction with the lessons of the gospel.

When a writer maintains an untenable position, we generally meet, in the style of exaggeration which he employs, with specially emphatic clauses. The reviewer tells us, "that, instead of being stationary or retrograde, the condition of all classes, but *particularly of the labourers*, has been vastly improved since the American war, and *especially during the present century*."* Now, it so happens, that in both the clauses where he has laid the stress of particularity on the one, and of especiality on the other, the emphasis is misplaced. If, by labourers, be meant those to whom the designation purely and properly belongs, who receive wages simply in return for the exertion of their strength, and not because of the power they have of bringing to a dead stand, or state of unproductiveness, the enormous capital of their employers; it will be found, under our exposure of the reviewer's first great error, that their wages lie at the bottom of the scale. And, again, under our exposure of his second great error, it will be

* Page 57 of the Review.

found that a general re-action, in the condition of the working classes, took place about twenty years ago; and that, precisely during the present century, their progress was first arrested, and then turned backwards. He has been unfortunate both in regard to the class of men, and to the period of years, on which he meant to lay the pith of his argument. He made a two-fold selection, for the obvious purpose of enhancing his statement, or the proof by which he was supporting it; and in both he is wrong. We have sometimes to correct a reader for laying the emphasis on wrong words. The reviewer has laid his emphasis on wrong things.

But the mistake into which the reviewer has fallen is a common one in all Philosophy. It is the mistake of those who would collect the permanent and immutable laws of nature, from the study, not of her wonted courses, but of her transition or temporary processes, which come speedily to a termination. When justice, and order, and law were for the first time securely established throughout Scotland, at the middle of the last century—in the then imperfect state of its cultivation, and with such a vast amount of unimproved, and yet highly improvable territory before it, it was sure to make rapid, but not on that account, indefinite and interminable progress. While the process of enlargement was going on, the opening and augmenting resources of the country, kept so far ahead of the population, as to admit both a free increase

of their numbers, and a general elevation in the style of their enjoyments. And so the reviewer, looking back to this sudden and mighty acceleration, can see nothing in the fixed necessities of the constitution under which we are placed, in the very limits of the territory upon which we stand, and still more in the eternal barriers of its last possible agriculture, to prevent the same history from being acted over and over again, or from lasting for ever. Yet he does seem to labour under the sensation of certain impediments, actually felt at this moment, and which stand in the way of that elastic and illimitable progress that a right political eeconomy is infallibly to secure for us. A cause for these impediments must be assigned; and he finds it in the abuses of the poor-laws. Let these only be modified, and in despite of all the tendencies of population, in despite of the undoubted and demonstrable excess which the power of the species to increase has over the power of the soil to multiply its products, in despite of the irreversible laws of Nature—the reviewer, unmindful of these, but seeks for an amendment and a new administration of the laws of England, after which there will be nothing, positively "nothing to counteract the onward progress of the country."*

In the investigations of physical science, a theory on any given subject is not dismissed, but still held to be valuable, even though it should not perfectly account for all the facts which are connected with

* Page 62 of the Review.

it. It is the practice of all the soundest and most successful disciples in this branch of inquiry, still to keep their hold upon the theory; and, viewing the anomalous, or yet unexplained facts in the light of what they term 'residual phenomena,'* they seek after the modifying circumstances which might account for the existence of them; and often have the satisfaction of discovering, not only that they are perfectly consistent with the theory against which they seemed to rebel, but afford a decisive corroboration to it. It is even so with the theory of population, which recognizes an impassable limit to the numbers of the human race, and a degradation of comfort, if that limit be too hardly pressed upon. But this prevents not, in particular cases, both rapid enlargements in the population of a country, and along with this as rapid an elevation in the style of their enjoyments. Yet, on investigating the special or the modifying causes, we are sure to find, that, so far from confounding the theory of population, they but serve to confirm it. To admit, as we have done throughout, the successive enlargements, which one improvement after another, whether in the agriculture and the arts of a nation, or in the political economy of its government, will surely give rise to; and yet, to retain the Malthusian doctrine of population, is to proceed, we apprehend, as sound philosophers do, with a general theory and its residual, but in this

* See Sir John Herschell's admirable Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy.

instance, its now incorporated and harmonized phenomena. But our reviewer has abjured the theory of population—reposing though it does on the palpable inductions of history, and the plainest results of calculation, or on the real and essential phenomena of the question; and he has given us in place, a universal theory, founded on the residual phenomena alone.

But the most decisive way of bringing this whole controversy to the test, would be to institute an actual computation respecting one of these hoped-for enlargements; and, for the sake of full justice to the reviewer, we will give up to him his own numbers, or those used by himself, in estimating the effect of that one enlargement which, by the common consent of economists, is the most important of them all. We mean, the abolition of the corn laws—a measure which the reviewer would lead us to believe, will keep us all right for at least about half a century to come; or rather, will be the mean of letting in upon us a stream of prosperity, enough for the peace and plenty of our nation to the most distant ages. We think his imagination a sanguine one, when he counts, as the effect of this repeal, on the importation of as much food as shall be equivalent to the sustenance of four millions of people.* But let even this be conceded; and, judging of the future from the past, let us endeavour, on the data which the reviewer himself hath prescribed to us, to guess at the result of it.

* See page 70 of the Review.

The population of Britain in 1801, was 10,942,646; the population in 1831, was 16,537,398—making an increase in thirty years of more than five millions and a half. But it were fairer to compare the last census with that of 1811, when the population was 12,609,864; for though it exhibits the increase for the last twenty years to be somewhat less than four millions—yet, if the proportional increase for the next twenty years be the same with what has actually taken place since 1811, we should, by 1851, have the addition of considerably more than four millions. In other words, with a rate of increase in our population the same as from 1811, we shall, in less than twenty years, overtake the whole quantity of imported food which the most ardent of our speculators have yet counted on. But we presume that they do not calculate on an instant enlargement to all this extent of supplies from abroad; or that food for four millions will be landed on our shores, the very first year after the repeal of our corn laws. If we ever reach so large a maximum of importation as this, we shall reach it gradually; and, supposing this to be the case, the yearly increase of our population may just keep pace with the yearly increase of our food, through the twenty years to come, as through the twenty years that are already past. It matters not to the comfort of our population, if the additional corn do come to our markets, from what quarter it comes—whether, as hitherto, from the enlargement of our own agriculture; or, as henceforth, from the agricul-

ture of other lands now thrown open to us. For the next twenty years then, even admitting the largest anticipations that have yet been conceived from the repeal of our corn laws, we have no reason to expect a better economic state for the people, than they enjoyed during the twenty years that have just gone by,—a period of various and chequered fortune, but certainly marked by any other character than that of secure and progressive prosperity,—a period, not of great popular discontent only, but often of great and general distress; and when, notwithstanding the actual enlargement which has taken place in the means of subsistence, the urgently felt need of a further enlargement formed the most powerful of all those moving forces, that led to the greatest movement which ever took place, without a revolution, in the history of public affairs. The addition made to our food during the last twenty years, is equal to the addition which the most sanguine of our calculators do anticipate for the next twenty years, from the repeal of the corn laws. And yet certainly, the prevalent sensation, throughout the whole of the bygone period, among the manufacturing classes, has been that of straitness and insufficiency. We cannot therefore sympathize in the exultation of the reviewer, as he looks forward to the next half century of unshackled commerce, and, to the food of four millions of human beings, as the fruit of our unrestrained access to all the granaries in the world. We would regulate our

hopes of the experiment, by our recollections of the experience; and these utterly forbid a brighter prospect of the future, than is our recollection of the past. And it does shake our confidence in the various resources and expedients of political economy—when thus taught, by the plainest arithmetic, that this most promising of all its measures, this most effective of all its strokes, the repeal of the corn laws, is to do so little for us. Without some higher and more effective operation still, we have too vivid a remembrance of the complaints, and the outcries, and the actual sufferings of our rapidly increasing population, during the rapidly increasing subsistence of the years that have elapsed —to calculate with any degree of assurance, either on the blessings of internal peace, or the comforts of increased abundance for the coming generation.

There is another of the reviewer's estimates which leads to the same conclusion. He tells us, that the produce of Scotland, during the brilliant period of its advancement for the last sixty years, has increased six-fold.* But all that he expects from the repeal of the Corn Laws, and a very large expectation it is, is food for four millions, or food for less than a fourth part of our existing population; less, therefore, than a fourth part of the food actually consumed at present within the limits of the British territory. It follows not, that though a six-fold augmentation of the means of subsistence should permit that free movement of

* See Review, page 60.

advance which Scotland has doubtless undergone, that Britain will experience any thing like it; or that the comforts and circumstances of its people will be sensibly raised by an augmentation, which, taken relatively, is less than a twenty-fourth part of that which has been assigned for our own portion of the empire. In the one case, the population may have passed into a state of wider and larger sufficiency than before; a process exemplified in Scotland, not after, however, but rather till the commencement of the present century; and which certainly terminated more than twenty years ago. In the other case, the advancing population may hang on the rear of the advancing food; nay, press upon it, as they have actually done during the last twenty years; and that, notwithstanding an increase in the means of subsistence, equal to all which is promised us from a repeal of the Corn Laws. In other words, we have no warrant, either from calculation or experience, to anticipate a brighter era than that which has just passed over us; with this only difference, that all its dissatisfactions and discomforts will be aggravated by the disappointment of those fallacious hopes into which the people have been betrayed.

Yet, as the reviewer knows, we advocate the repeal of the Corn Laws; though not so much for the sake of its material benefits, as of its moral effect, in the removal of those heart-burnings and hostile jealousies, which threaten to tear asunder

the component parts of British society. Respecting the economic measure, we are practically at one; and what the remaining quarrel or controversy is, on this part of the subject, we are at a loss to comprehend. Is it that we would commence too early, our proposed operation on the hearts and habits of the people? Is it yet soon enough, or over-soon, to adopt a vigorous educational system, whose influence might thoroughly pervade the whole of that plebeian mass which is now congregated in cities; and even through the country at large, has outgrown all the instituted means, whether of common or Christian instruction? Are we too precipitate in recommending the instant multiplication of schools and parishes in towns; or too earnest in imploring the dispensers of patronage, to act forthwith on the sacred responsibility of their trusts, and recollect that, in their hands are placed the dearest and the highest interests of families? Must all attempts to moralize, and truly to enlighten the commonalty of our nation, be kept in abeyance till political economy has run the whole course of its expedients; or, what were infinitely worse, till the politics and the mock patriotism of our day, have practised, even to exhaustion, the cajolery of their lying promises on a cruelly deceived population?

It is an observation of the sagacious Talleyrand, that a mob is never formidable, if we speak to their reason, and treat them with frankness and

honesty. More hateful, and a thousand times more pernicious to the commonwealth, than even the sycophants of the court, are the sycophants of the people—those blind leaders of the blind, who, by turning the attention and desire of the working classes to the wrong quarter, for that enlargement which awaits them, do but perpetuate their bondage, and sink them deeper into want and helplessness than before. They only are their true friends, who tell them, with undaunted fidelity, wherein it is that their great strength, and also wherein it is, that their great weakness lies. Let them be reckless, and dissolute; and, uncaring of all consequences, bent only, and that to the last farthing of their present means, on the revelry of their present enjoyments—then there is no one expedient, within the whole compass of politics or political economy, which can save them from degradation. On the other hand, let each be wise and wary for himself. Let those who can afford to squander, now begin to accumulate. On the question of marriage, we bid them take their lesson, not at the school of Malthus, but at the school of common sense, and of their own individual discretion. We are quite willing, that they shall be eternally kept without reach of his economic theory on population, if they can also be kept without reach of the senseless cry which has been raised in opposition to it. It is enough for any object of ours, if the step of their entrance upon a family, shall be practically regarded as one wherewith prudence

and principle have to do—instead of being regarded as the only occasion of life in which recklessness is a virtue, and a defiance to all consequences, is faith in the providence of God. We do not care for their being tutored by the economists, could they only be rescued from the wretched misguidance of the sentimentalists and bigots upon this question. We do not want either the one party of these speculators, or the other, to decide this question for the people—but we want the people to have such a knowledge, and such a taste, and such a morality given to them, as that they should be enabled to decide the matter wisely and respectably for themselves. When once this is done, they will stand upon sure vantage-ground. In virtue of their accumulated funds, and no longer in the prostrate condition of men who are from hand to mouth, they will be raised above the necessity of working for their immediate subsistence. In virtue of their restrained and regulated families, the means of subsistence will be more liberally shared amongst them. It is only when the market ceases to be overstocked with human labour, that labourers have the dictation of their own terms—or, can at least treat independently with their employers. This is the very place of eminence and security, in which we should rejoice to behold them; and rejoice the more, because of that pathway of intelligence and virtue by which they must have won their way to it. The arts and inventions of machinery have enlarged, and will continue to en-

large, indefinitely, the production of wealth; but it is by a mental and moral regimen alone, that we shall secure the right distribution of it. We know of no other practical solution for this great problem; and therefore it is, that we have ventured to assert the impotency of every expedient besides. This, in truth, seems to have been the main substance and amount of our offending. What all economists admit to be of some importance, we pronounce to be of supreme importance: That moral worth, which they regard as but helpful, we regard as indispensable, to the economic well-being of the people.

While we would leave the elevated parts of our social fabric untouched, all our fondest wishes are on the side of the common people. It is our belief, that through the medium, not of a political change in the state, but of a moral and personal change upon themselves, there is not one desirable amelioration which they might not mount their way to. The combination laws, those engines of a systematic injustice against the rights of far the most important order in the community, are now done away; and it only remains, that by the tacit, yet effectual combination of their own virtue, and economy, and prudence, they shall take that path of onward and indefinite advancement which now lies before them. The condition to which they might hopefully aspire—and it is the part of every honest and enlightened philanthropist to help them forward to it—is that of less work and higher

wages; and this, not only that they might participate more largely in the physical enjoyments of life, but that, in exemption from oppressive toil, and with the command of dignified leisure, there might be full opportunity and scope for the development of their nobler faculties, in the prosecution of all the higher objects of a rational and immortal existence. There is but one practicable opening, we hold, to such an enlargement for the working classes, and which can only be made good by the strength of their own moral determination—when, after the spectacle of cheerful and well-paid industry has been fully realized, we shall at length behold them emancipated from their sore bondage, and these brethren of our common nature transformed into lettered, and humanized, and companionable men.

The days were when the Edinburgh Review would have participated more cordially in all these sentiments—not only in regard to the omnipotence of moral causes for the elevation of the working classes, but, separately from these, in regard to the utter hopelessness of permanent good to them from any other quarter. In proof of this, we feel tempted to offer a further extract from the article to which we have already referred;* in which, after exposing the futility of all that could be done *ab extra*, for the relief of labourers, in a season of great depression, we endeavoured to point out how much, in

* Page 39.

the long run, they, under the guidance of prudence and principle, could do for themselves.

"There is yet another, and a far more excellent way; not to be attained, certainly, but by a change of habit among the workmen themselves; yet such a change as may be greatly promoted by those whose condition or character gives them influence in society. We have always been of opinion, that the main use of a savings' bank was, not to elevate labourers into the class of capitalists, but to equalize and improve their condition as labourers. We should like them to have each a small capital, not wherewith to become manufacturers, but wherewith to control manufacturers. It is in this way, and we can see no other, that they will be enabled to weather all the fluctuations to which trade is liable. It is the cruel necessity of overworking, which feeds the mischief of superabundant stock; and which renders so very large a transference of hands necessary, ere the market can be relieved of the load under which it groans and languishes. Now, this is a necessity that can only be felt by men on the brink of starvation; who live from hand to mouth, and have scarcely more than the day's earnings for the subsistence of the day. Let these men only be enabled, on the produce of former accumulations, to live through a season of depression while they work moderately, or, if any of them should so choose it, while they do not work at all; and they would not only lighten such a period of its wretchedness, but they would inconceivably shorten its duration. The overplus of manufactured goods, which is the cause of miserable wages, would soon clear away, under that restriction of work which would naturally follow on the part of men who did not choose, because they did not need, to work for miserable wages. What is now a protracted season of suffering and discontent to the lower orders, would, in these circumstances, become to them, a short but brilliant career of holiday enjoyment. The report of a heavy downfal of wages, instead of sounding like a knell of despair in their ears, would be their signal for rising up to play. We have heard, that there

does not exist in our empire, a more intellectual and accomplished order of workmen than the weavers of Paisley. It was their habit, we understand, to abandon their looms throughout the half, or nearly the whole, of each Saturday, and to spend this time in gardening, or in the enjoyment of a country walk. It is true, that such time might sometimes be viciously spent; but still we should rejoice in such a degree of sufficiency among our operatives, as that they could afford a lawful day of every week for their amusement; and still more, that they could afford whole months of relaxed and diminished industry, when industry was underpaid. This is the dignified posture which they might attain; but only after the return of better times, and through the medium of their own sober and determined economy. Every shilling laid up in store, and kept in reserve for the evil day, would strengthen the barrier against such a visitation of distress and difficulty, as that from which we are yet scarcely emerging. The very habits too, which helped them to accumulate in the season of well-paid work, would form our best guarantee against the vicious or immoral abuse of this accumulation, in the season either of entire or comparative inactivity. We would expect an increase of reading, and the growth of literary cultivation, and the steady advancement of virtuous and religious habits; and altogether, a greater weight of character and influence among the labouring classes, as the permanent results of such a system. Instead of being the victims of every adverse movement in trade, they would become its most effective regulators.

"This is the eminence that the labourers of our nation are fully capable both of reaching and of maintaining. But it is neither the poor-rate of England, nor the law of parochial aid in Scotland, that will help them on to it. These have only deceived them away from the path which leads to independence; and, amid all the complaints which have been raised against the system of a compulsory provision for the poor, nothing is more certain, than that our poor, because underpaid operatives, are the principal sufferers by it. Every other class in society has its compensation. It is paid back again

to the manufacturer, in the shape of a reduction to the wages of his workmen; and to the landholder, by a reduction in the price of all manufactured articles. It is only the operative himself, who appears to be pensioned by it, that is really impoverished. It has deadened all those incitements to accumulation, which would have raised him and his fellow-labourers to a footing of permanent security in the state. And, not till their eyes have been opened to the whole mischief and cruelty of this delusion—not till they see where it is that their most powerful and malignant enemy is lying in ambush—not till they have learned that, under the guise of charity, there has been an influence at work, for many years, which has arrested the march of the lower orders to the elevation that naturally and rightfully belongs to them,—and till they come to understand, that it is by their own exertion and self-denial alone, that they can win their way to it; not, in short, till the popular cry is for the abolition, rather than the extension of pauperism, will our labouring classes have attained their full share of comfort and importance in the commonwealth."—*Edin. Review*, Vol. xxxiii. pages 393–395.

We are abundantly sensible to the charge of Utopianism, which has been preferred against our anticipation. It is impossible to be otherwise; for we have heard it a thousand times over; and with all the greater emphasis now—that we have endeavoured to demonstrate the Utopianism of every other anticipation or expedient for the permanent amelioration of our species. There would be Utopianism in the expectation, that, by the utterance of a word, as if, by the lifting of a magical wand, the population of our empire were to be suddenly moralized. But there is no such Utopianism in looking for a similar result, on the families of a

manageable section, whether in town or country, from the protracted assiduities of a Christian philanthropist, appointed to live and to labour in the midst of them. The achievement wears a visionary and impracticable aspect—only because contemplated in its totality; and without regard, either to its component parts, or to the distinct and separate steps which lead to this grand consummation. But any national or universal result which we look for, will be made out by a summation of particulars; and if those particulars do severally lie within the compass of human instrumentality, this should be enough to redeem our hopes from the charge of extravagance or unlikelihood. For when we speak of the power of education, it is of education multiplied into ten thousand distinct and particular efforts, pervading every city mass, made to overspread the whole extent, and to penetrate into every corner, of the land. The effect is gigantic; but without one giant having to do in the execution of it—for it will be brought about, not by the transcendent powers of one or a few individuals, but by the numbers of ordinary men. The work to be done is great, and will need a proportional machinery for the doing of it—a thick-set establishment of schools and parishes, the indispensable condition of whose efficiency is, that they shall be righteously patronized. The result will at length be arrived at, not by the working of one mighty organization for the achievement of great things; but by the accumulation of small things,—

not by men whose taste it is to contemplate what is splendid in philanthropy; but by men whose practical talent it is, to do what is substantial in philanthropy,—not by men who eye, with imaginative transport, the broad and boundless expanse of humanity; but by men, who can work in drudgery and in detail, at the separate portions of it. The glory of establishing in our world that universal reign of truth and of righteousness which is coming, will not be the glory of any one man; but it will be the glory of Him who sitteth above, and plieth his many millions of instruments for bringing about this magnificent result. It is enough for each of us to be one of these instruments, to contribute his little item to the cause, and look for the sum total as the product of innumerable contributions, each of them as meritorious, and many of them, perhaps, far more splendid and important than his own.

To change the habit of a nation, must ever seem a Utopian enterprise, so long as we measure the achievement by our own individual strength. But this is not the work of one man, but of many thousand men; and it is not Utopianism, but experience, to affirm the possibility that each of those men shall, in his own territorial vineyard, and among the people of his peculiar charge, realize the union which obtains between the Christianity of a state, and those blessings of a civil or temporal nature which follow in its train. Their first concern is with the religion, the righteousness of the

people; but we are not to overlook the declaration, that when he who seeketh this first also findeth it, all other things shall be added unto him. There is a most important connection between the Christianity and the sound economic condition of our families; and while the lessons of political science, as they fall from the lips of philosophers, however just in principle, are wholly impotent in practice—we have long thought, that they are the clergymen of a land, who hold those master-springs, by a right impulse on which, they might speed forward, and at length achieve, all those objects, which are dearest to the heart, either of the philanthropist or of the patriot. More especially do we regard them as in occupation of the best vantage-ground, for combating all the difficulties which are felt or imagined in the problem of pauperism; and that it lies with them, without departing by a single hair-breadth from the sacredness of their profession, to avert from our borders this sore, this withering blight on the virtues of the Scottish population. Believing, as we do, of that moral pestilence, that, in the deadly virus wherewith it is charged, there exist all the elements of misery and corruption—we cannot deem the question of parish economics unworthy of a place among the other cares and studies of a clergyman. Political economy is not theology; but political economy, as associated with the moral state and moral prospects of society, is that upon which even theology might deign to cast an eye. This science, celestial though it be, pos-

sesses a mighty ascendant over all terrestrial interests and affairs. Heaven is the ultimate landing-place of its contemplations—yet the history of earth has either been directed by its power, or deeply leavened by its presence. With its corruption stood palpably associated the darkness and despotism of the middle ages—and it is no less palpable, whether we look to the wider theatre of Europe, or to the struggles of piety and patriotism in our own land, that its Reformation was the harbinger of all the light and the liberty of our modern day. Now, let us hope there is reserved for it a more pacific, yet more glorious triumph—not on the arena of a stormy politics, but by its silent operation on the growth of popular intelligence and virtue throughout our parishes; thus providing the surest remedy for all the moral and political disorders to which a country is exposed; and, while its main object is the preparation of human beings for eternity, scattering a thousand beatitudes along the way that leads to it; and, in the formation of a well-principled and well-constituted peasantry, rendering the best of services to the commonwealth.

POSTSCRIPT.

In our Pamphlet, entitled, "On the Supreme Importance of a Right Moral to a Right Economical State of the Community," we have endeavoured to rectify the misconceptions in a recent article of the Edinburgh Review, relative both to the standard of enjoyment, and to the great actual improvement which is there affirmed to have taken place in the habits and condition of the people. We shall therefore not recur to these topics now, but proceed immediately to the consideration of certain other objections, which the reviewer has brought forward against a few of the special doctrines of our work. We flatter ourselves, that a very brief rejoinder on our part, more especially if accompanied by a careful re-perusal of the denounced passages on the part of the reader, will prove enough to satisfy him of the futility of these objections.

I. The first of the reviewer's impeachments which we feel ourselves called upon to notice, is that which he prefers against our views on the restorative power of capital—in virtue of which, if impaired by extravagance or certain other causes, it, by an instant operation on prices, recovers, almost *per saltum*, the whole of the loss or diminution which it had sustained. Had he noticed our admission, as to the effect of a universal mania on the side of expenditure,* it might have prevented his attempt to destroy our principle by a *reductio ad absurdum*. The truth is, that the case which he supposes, of an extreme and unlimited expenditure, and of its undoubted effect in sweeping off all capital from the land, so far from subverting

* See Chap. IV. Sect. 6 and 7 of the Work.

the analogy between the two elements of capital and population, tends to complete and to confirm it. A universal celibacy, or exterminating epidemic, would depopulate the land; and yet it remains an undoubted principle, that, notwithstanding the actual ravages of disease and war, the deficiency of numbers is speedily repaired, and the population is upheld from year to year, in a state commensurate to the means of their subsistence. A universal consumption and refusal to accumulate, would effect the utter extinction of capital within our borders, yet capital possesses all the elastic force which we have ascribed to it—in virtue of which, not by a process of economy on the part of remaining capitalists, but at the expense of purchasers, and by the operation of high prices, the capital, if it sustain diminution one year, is rebuilt the next, up to its original magnitude; and so is upholden in a state commensurate to the means of its profitable investiture.

But the reviewer attempts a positive, as well as a negative or indirect refutation. He first conceives the price of the article to have been made so much higher, by the limitation of the capital employed in the preparation of it—that we are led to seek it from other lands, and thus enrich foreigners at the expense of our own country. Let us shortly trace the effect of this operation. In so far as we have to pay for this new import, by the exportation of agricultural produce, in as far do we alienate a certain portion of the people's maintenance from our shores. In so far, which would be the case in Britain, as we would pay for it in export manufactures—in as far do we extend one department of British industry, and in the degree precisely equal to the contraction that has been suffered by another. The capital which disappeared from one branch of our national industry, re-appears in other branches. The same ability of purchasers which would have replaced the capital of the one, had it stood, adds an equal capital to the others which are extended. The addition made to our imports first tells, as is indicated by its effect on the rate of exchange, in raising the profits of our export trade, and then terminates in a corresponding addition to our exports.

But what the reviewer deems his most conclusive argument against our doctrine is, not that the article may become so dear through the diminished capital, as that customers shall be led to seek it from abroad; but, that the article may become so dear as that customers shall be led not to seek after it at all. Now we do not need to be told, that the price of an article may be so far increased, as to diminish the consumption in a greater ratio—so that, on the whole, less money shall be spent on that article than before. It is true, that we advanced the supposition of the same pecuniary expenditure having been made upon glass after it had become dearer—not however because the truth of our principle depended on the supposition, but because the supposition might be of use in illustrating the principle. The re-appearance of the same capital at the end of the year, does not depend upon an equal sum being spent on the identical article now made dearer. It depends on an equal sum being spent. Though customers had reduced to any extent their purchase of glass, or had abandoned it altogether—that annual portion of their wealth which wont to be spent on glass, would either be spent on other articles, or would remain with themselves. If the former, then, by this shift in the expenditure, there might be as much of additional capital upheld in other branches of industry as has been lost to glass-making. If the latter, and the wealth thus remaining with customers be not hoarded, but deposited in banks, it will thence be advanced in loans, either to men who spend it, and in the act of spending will create or augment capitals in other employments, to the extent of the whole sum that wont to be vested in glass-making; or to men who employ it in business themselves, and so will cause it to assume the form of an operative capital in their own hands.

We may here notice an objection against our principle, which the reviewer has not specified—even that our reasonings, although they should be held conclusive in regard to circulating, do not apply to fixed capital. Our illustrations certainly are taken more from the case of circulating, than of fixed capital; but the reasoning is equally solid or equally fallacious

with both. Neither the fixed nor the circulating capital can be extended beyond the limits of that returning power, by which they are replaced with a profit; and either, though largely encroached upon, so as to be reduced beneath that limit, will, by the action on prices and their consequent increase, speedily recover itself—the circulating in one, the fixed in several revolutions of the economic cycle. They are the consequent higher prices which repair the loss that the capital of the country sustains from the extravagance of individual merchants; they were the enormous war prices which sustained the capital under the vast yearly absorptions of the government loans.

There is nothing in our principle to affect the maxim brought forward by the reviewer, that "the hand of the diligent maketh rich;" neither is there ought in this maxim to affect the truth of our principle. The spendthrift ruins himself irrecoverably; and though the capital which he has wasted almost instantly re-appears, it does not spring up again in his hands, but in the hands of those brother capitalists, who have acted with greater wisdom than himself. And this new capital, which appears in place of the old that has been dissipated, is not a magical creation out of nothing, but is built up out of the privations for the year, of those who have to encounter the higher prices of an under-supplied market. These higher prices do, of themselves, explain the resuscitation of the capital; and to superadd the painstaking economy of the remaining capitalists, is to call in the operation of a doubly greater energy than the effect to be accounted for requires.

There are laws of political economy, as stable and irreversible as are the laws of nature. And, notwithstanding the pleasantries of the Quarterly Reviewer, it still holds true, that if the capital of a country be a hundred millions, and its profit ten per cent. so as to yield the return of a hundred and ten millions to the holders of it—then, let this capital be reduced, by the extravagance of some of its possessors, to ninety-nine millions; and, should no other change have taken place in the circumstances of the people, the next return will still be a

hundred and ten millions as before, or the profit for the year will be elevated to upwards of eleven per cent. The capitalists would, in the aggregate, earn a larger revenue one year; and that precisely because of their larger expenditure on the year which preceded it. And yet, in perfect consistency with this, those capitalists who spend most beyond the eleven per cent. would decline the most in individual wealth; and those capitalists who saved most within the eleven per cent. would advance the most in individual wealth. The reviewer hath neglected this distinction; and managed, in consequence, to conjure up one of those specious plausibilities, which strike the senses of the multitude, and serve the purpose of casting a temporary obscuration on sound principle. He hath forgotten that political economy deals in aggregates; and, whether the oversight be unintelligent or wilful, it is alike unworthy of science.

The Author of our nature hath so wisely adapted the constitution of man to the interests of human society, that the moral forces on the side of expenditure and accumulation balance each other. If the tendency be to spend too much, the effect on prices and profits is such, as to hold forth a sufficient lure to the lovers of gain; and, if the tendency be to accumulate too much, the effect in lowering prices and profits is such, that further accumulation may cease to be an object; and the general cheapness becomes in its turn a lure to the lovers of enjoyment. The opposite tendencies meet, and counteract each other. Individual capital may often shift hands; but, in the midst of all these oscillations, the general capital of the nation is ever tending, and is never far from it, to the state that is best suited to the actual circumstances of the period. Capital, in short, is a self-regulating interest; and as little requires the helping hand of statesmen, as does the element of population.

The Edinburgh Reviewer mistakes the relation in which machinery and capital stand to each other; or the precise effect which the improvement of the former has on the magnitude of the latter. Should the time ever arrive, when agricul-

ture shall have reached its last possible limit, and art shall have arisen to its greatest possible perfection, capital would still recover itself up to that certain mean state from which it had fallen by some depressing fluctuation; and that, in virtue alone of a quick and sudden reaction on prices, and the consequently higher profits. The proper office of machinery is not to restore capital, but to extend it. When the work of human hands is made more effective than before, by the intervention of tools or instruments of any sort, this operates to the extension of agriculture, and so to the extension of population, or the amount of immediate labour which the country, with its increased produce, can now subsist; and so also to the extension of capital, or the amount of accumulated labour which the country, with its increased business, can now remunerate. This is the real process which takes place spontaneously, and at will, with every onward step, by which art is improved and agriculture extended; so as to make it an equally needless and misplaced anxiety, whether the apprehension be, lest the country should not be adequately supplied with the living, or not be adequately supplied with the dead instruments of labour.

II. The next of the reviewer's charges which we shall notice, is, that we do not annex a sufficient value either to manufactures or to foreign trade. We value both up to the full extent of all which they do for us. And the principle on which we found our estimate seems a very obvious one, and to carry its own evidence along with it; having, in fact, the very character and instant force upon our convictions, which belongs to any axiom or truism. The principle is this—that the importance or worth of any manufacture is to be regarded as neither more nor less, than the worth or importance of its products; the worth or importance of any branch of foreign trade, is neither more nor less, than the worth or importance of the articles which it brings to our shores. All, for example, which a hatter contributes to society, is hats—this is his service; it is not greater than this, it is not less than this. Whatever

benefit can be demonstrated of hats, that benefit, in full, is rendered to the public by hat-makers. In like manner, all we owe to the stocking manufacture, is stockings; to the wine trade, is wine; and so to other manufactures or other trades, we owe cloth, or cutlery, or glass, or porcelain, or tea, or sugar, or oranges, or nitre, and a thousand other commodities exceedingly various both in kind and in the degrees of their importance; but such an importance as represents, or rather constitutes, the whole importance of the respective processes of industry, by which they, one and all of them, are prepared for human use and human enjoyment.

It is strange, that the utterance of so mere a truism should ever have been called for; or that any errors and illusions should have arisen in the science of political economy, in the face of a principle having such extreme obviousness and simplicity as this. But so it is; and the idea of something more than its own products being originated by a trade or manufacture, pervades the whole business of charity, and law, and politics. In devising for the relief of poverty, the conception both of parish vestries and parliaments, seems undoubtedly to have been, that the providing of indefinite employment was tantamount to the providing of indefinite maintenance for the people—as if the making of highways, or the preparation of straw bonnets, provided something more than the road or the bonnet; but, over and above this, had some sort of effect in the production of bread. The same conception enters into the alarm, or rather gives birth to it, which is felt on the prospect or the risk of any manufacture being destroyed, or branch of foreign trade being put an end to. The effect would be, that we might lose shawls, or tea, or spiceries, or other articles of more and less utility; and be obliged to reserve the wealth which wont formerly to be expended on these, for the purchase of something else. But the apprehension is, that, over and above the loss of these products, we should lose the very subsistence of the thousands who are engaged in the preparation of them; beside so much of all the other interests, comprised in, or suggested by, the very names of wealth, and power, and

national revenue—as if these lay in the things that were consumed, and not in the ability of the consumers; in the products of the various manufactures and trades, and not in the price which was paid by them.

Never was a reviewer more wide of the mark, than our antagonist is at present, in attempting to displace or to nullify this principle. He undertakes the refutation of one doctrine, by the affirmation of another doctrine, wherewith it has no earthly connection. We affirm, that the only benefit which a manufacture renders to society is its own products. And to meet this, for the purpose too of overturning it, he tells of the mighty benefit which has been rendered to society by the division of labour. Verily there is nothing in the one affirmation which cometh into contact, far less into conflict with the other. It is greatly better, that, instead of the same man making both hats and stockings, one man should be employed in making hats only, and another man in making stockings only. In this way a double, or treble, or perhaps larger multiple than either of these, both of hats and stockings, is served up for the benefit of the community. Still the hat-maker gives hats only, though more hats—the stocking-maker gives stockings only, though more stockings. We shall willingly, however, estimate the thing at as much as it is worth. Two hats are better than one, two pairs of stockings are better than one; and this is the strict and proper benefit which society receives from the division of labour. Human enjoyments are greatly multiplied by this arrangement; and we have furthermore endeavoured to show, how it speeds onward the extension of the agriculture to inferior soils—so that human subsistence is greatly increased by it. Nevertheless, it holds true of each special manufacture, that it emanates nothing but its own appropriate and special products; and no mere multiplying process can transmute the products of one manufacture into those of another, or into any thing else. The multiplication of chairs will never produce tables, nor the multiplication of tables produce chairs. And the same reasoning holds true of foreign trade, by which our enjoyments have been greatly varied; and, through the wider scope given

by it to the division of employment, our enjoyments have been greatly multiplied. We have endeavoured to estimate, and do estimate very highly the importance of foreign trade.* Still, the principle for which we contend survives all these admissions—that the wine trade yields nothing else to the nation than wine, and the orange trade than oranges, and the sugar trade than sugar, and lastly, the corn trade than corn. These various articles are all useful in their respective ways; and the last of them the most useful of any. For their sake we have advocated a free general trade; but, for reasons peculiar to itself, have we advocated most strenuously of all, a free corn trade.

But, lastly, a qualification on this principle has been made by ourselves, but is insisted on by others greatly beyond all legitimate boundaries—that trade and manufactures do contribute something more than their own peculiar commodities; for it is the presentation of these commodities which arouses the sleeping energies of the husbandman, and so stimulates the agriculture, as to have enriched the nation with an incalculably greater quantity of food. This is an intelligible assertion, and altogether free of mysticism. Nevertheless, we should be grievously misled by it, if we gave in to the delusion, that what trade and manufactures did for us in an incipient, it can still do in an advanced or extreme state of the agriculture. The truth is, now that the change is fully established of taste and habit on the part of the landlords, which begun at the termination of the middle, and commencement of the modern ages—no possible fluctuations or failures, either in trade or manufactures, can recall the agriculture from that limit, at which the land last entered on yields a produce, that will feed the agricultural labourers and their secondaries, beside some further excess over and above this, for a profit to the farmer. Neither does it follow from this, that we plead for the abolition of trade and manufactures—or that, if ever the sentence of annihilation were passed and executed upon them, the agriculture of the country would proceed notwithstanding. It is enough, both for the

* See Note at pages 189 to 191 of the Work.

integrity and the importance of our principle, that no possible change in trade and manufactures, whether induced by an adverse politics abroad, or by a fluctuation in the taste of customers, and the direction of the expenditure at home—can leave the landlords without a sufficiency of objects on which to spend their income, or can practically extinguish within them the ambition and desire of making these incomes as large as possible. This will ever secure for us such an agriculture, as shall be competent to the maintenance of the greatest desirable population; while the only permanent effect of any actual revolution in trade or manufactures, will be the loss, or rather the change of enjoyment to the landlords; and to the people a change in the direction of their industry. Had this principle been acted on, it might have saved us many a disastrous war; and, worst of all disasters, that of a neglected and uneducated population. Our government would never go to war for the sake of India shawls; but when the images of security, and subsistence, and power, and national grandeur, come to be delusively blended with the operations of merchandize—it will, and has gone to war for the sake of the India trade. Government would never have spared the adequate taxation for a thorough scholarship, whether in the moral or literary sense of the term, of all the people in the land—had it seen the real state of the alternative to be, a thorough education for all the orders of the community, and a somewhat abridged luxury for the higher orders. But it does shrink from the adequate taxation—when it looks on the terms of the alternative, as a thorough education of the people and an abridged commerce, or an abridgment, therefore, of all those interests, wherewith commerce has been so fancifully associated. It is thus that the highest objects of patriotism are involved in the truth of a principle, which, if admitted and acted upon, might have saved us all the wars of commercial jealousy, and all the distempers both moral and political, of an uninstructed population.

III. The last objection of the reviewer which we shall notice, is the one taken by him to our view of the incidence of taxes—

although he has only confined himself to a mere statement of the objection, without noticing any of the calculations, or the reasons by which our doctrine is supported.

In the first place, it is not enough to dispose of it by saying, that it is but a revival of the old doctrine of the French economists. The doctrine is the same; but we arrive at it by altogether different steps. The reasonings are not the same. We expressly disclaim the most essential principles which enter into the composition of their argument; and rest the doctrine in question, on considerations which did not occur, and which, in the state of the science at the time, could not have occurred to any of the economists of that period.

Neither is it enough to tell us, that the rental of Britain is short of the public revenue of Britain—a statement advanced by the Edinburgh reviewer, for the purpose of fastening an axiomatic absurdity on our argument; and advanced too by his more ironical brother, the Quarterly, as forming a small difficulty in our way. The acre of carrot seed, mentioned in our work, which bore a produce worth £80, after paying the tithe of £8 to the clergyman, could only afford a rent of £1 to the proprietor. And yet nothing can be more true, than that the tithe is a deduction from the rent, and therefore paid by the landlord—not a deduction from the £1 actually received by him, after the tithe was paid; but a deduction from the £9 that would have been paid to him had there been no tithe. We have not affirmed that the part is greater than the whole; but that the part may be greater than the remainder, after that part has been deducted from the whole. Our reviewers have confounded one element with another. They have treated the remainder, as if it had been the whole; or, in the language of our older arithmetical books, they have charged us with making the subtrahend greater than the minuend, when we have only made it greater than the difference between them.

The remission of the existing taxes would enrich the landlords in two ways. In the first place, by the removal of a burden from farmers and their servants, and cheapening all the other expenses of farm husbandry, it would to that extent

raise their rents. In the second place, by removing the burden from all other capitalists and labourers, and also by detaching from all taxed commodities an ingredient which now enters directly into their price, it would to that extent cheapen the various articles of family expenditure, which is tantamount to an increase of revenue. After this, although the whole of our present national revenue, were drawn by a personal levy from the landlords and their mortgagees jointly, including among the last, the holders of that great national mortgage the public debt—we think it could be arithmetically shown, that this would be laying no greater burden on the proprietors of the soil, than now lies upon them, in the shape both of higher prices and of lower rents, than would obtain under the new system of taxation.

This is quite enough, as an answer to both of these reviews—for, in truth, neither of them has entered argumentatively into the subject. But, since we went to press, we have seen the British Critic for October, whose perfect concurrence with us in the main lessons of our work, could not fail, amid the general lack of English sympathy, to be exceedingly agreeable. We have now some prospect of being understood, more especially on the subject of capital; with the help in particular of the very important remark made by this reviewer on our doctrine—which, though it has at times been present to our thoughts, we have not brought out in the volume. It is the general interest of labourers, that there should be a moderate population—in virtue of the connection between a moderate population and higher wages. And in this matter, there is the fullest harmony between the general and the individual interest, for it is to the obvious and direct advantage of each labourer, that he should not marry till in sufficient circumstances for the maintenance of a family. In like manner, it is for the general interest of capitalists, that capital should be moderate rather than excessive—in virtue of the connection which obtains between a moderate capital, and higher profits. But in this matter, there is not the same harmony between the individual and the general interest—it being the obvious and direct in-

terest of each individual capitalist, to save rather than to spend; while, on the other hand, the general interest of the body is promoted by the extravagance of so many of its members, though it may be an extravagance altogether ruinous to themselves. There is not only great truth, but great practical importance in this observation. It greatly confirms and augments the evidence for our doctrine—evincing, as it does, the even greater certainty wherewith capital will press on the limit of its profitable investiture, than population will on the limit of its possible subsistence. There is the check of each man's own individual interest to restrain the excess of population. There is no such check to restrain the excess and overflow of capital.

Having proceeded this length, the British Critic is not far from the conclusion, that all taxes do fall on the landed proprietors. He has helped himself forward to it. We confine ourselves at present to the case of those taxes, which fall, either directly on capitalists, or on the commodities that are used by them. Let their amount be five millions; and to this extent let us imagine that capitalists are relieved—or, in other words, that power is given them to live as before, and to vest an additional five millions in trade. The whole controversy resolves itself into the question, whether this investiture will or will not be made by them. It were readily admitted, we believe, on all hands, that they would make the investiture, had the taxes, thus remitted to them, been laid on the articles in which they deal; nor is there any other conception of the effect, than, that to relieve a trade of any imposts under which it labours, is just in that proportion to enlarge it. And is there any difference, we would ask, with Mr. Perronet Thomson—whether these taxes have been laid on the articles in which they trade, or on the articles which themselves consume? With the remission of either sort of taxes, it is evident, they obtain the same power of extending their business; and we see no such difference in the moral forces, brought into operation by the one way or the other of it, as at all to comprehend how it is, that they will not have the same disposition to extend it. With the phenomenon before our eyes, of the capital

of the country constantly pressing on the limit of its profitable investiture—let this limit be any how enlarged to the extent of five millions; and we may rest assured, that the increasing capital will soon reach forward to it, and exhibit the same phenomenon of a general pressure and overflow as before. Each individual capitalist will strain, as before, for his own immediate and individual advantage; and the general result will be, an extension of capital to the amount of five millions—met, at the same time, by no greater returning power than before the extension was made. In other words, there would take place, a general cheapening of all the articles in which capitalists deal, to the extent of the whole five millions that had been remitted. It is in vain to say, that the capitalists themselves, in as far as these articles are consumed by their own families, will have their share of this advantage. Our reply is, that, whatever advantage they gain from the change, whether immediate or posterior, it enables them in that proportion, to extend their business; and that, generally speaking, their willingness to extend it keeps pace with their ability. In other words, the whole benefit of the remission is shifted from them to the landlords, who are enabled, in consequence, without being worse off than before, to bear the whole burden of that tax from which the capitalists had been relieved. In the greater consequent cheapness of all the commodities which they used, they would have full compensation for the tax; and, in the present greater dearness of those commodities, they, at this moment, are the effective payers of it. The same holds good in the case of labourers; and by a process of reasoning, the principles of which, at that early period of the science, were altogether unknown to the school of Quesnai and Turgot, we arrive at the same conclusion with them, that all taxes fall upon the proprietors of the soil.

We shall not repeat the various modifications on our doctrine to which we have adverted in the work; and more especially to the distinction which we have pointed out between the temporary and the final effect of taxes. It is only in the latter sense, that all taxes fall upon the landlords. Taxes, on

their first establishment, may be paid virtually as well as ostensibly *for a time* by all classes—for a year, at least, both by labourers and the holders of circulating capital; for several, and in particular instances, for a considerable number of years, by the holders of fixed capital. These are the very cases, which supply the British Critic, and all others who stand opposed to us on this particular question, with the adverse phenomena which they might allege against the truth of our principle. And they are the cases too, which make it just as well as expedient, that the commutation should proceed gradually. It should begin with the taxes on the second necessaries of life; for it is of greatly more importance, that a right adjustment should be made between the labourers and upper classes of the community, than between the capitalists and landlords. A commutation, therefore, of all the taxes on those commodities which form any part of the maintenance of the common people; and an income or property tax, which should be so graduated, as to fall with greatest weight upon the wealthy, is, in the first instance, most desirable. A further commutation of the taxes on capitalists into a territorial impost, may, or may not, be the work of some future period. It were the consummation, we think, of a sound political economy on this question; and its most precious fruit, would be to sweeten and harmonize the politics of England.

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